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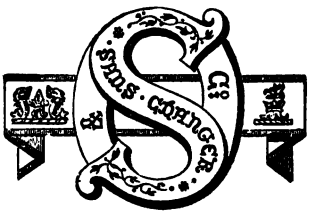
ASHCOMBE CHURCHYARD.

BY EVELYN BENSON.

" He walk'd the earth as those must walk whose minds
One motive urges, and one object binds ;
In youth's first flush he cast all joy away,
And only lived that life might bring one day ;
Around one centre all his powers he brought,
And crush'd his soul beneath one burning thought,
And that one thought was VENGEANCE !"

IN THREE VOLUMES.



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ASHCOMBE CHURCHYARD.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MODEL WOMAN.

"A creature not too bright and good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles.

. . . . . .

And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel's light."

WORDSWORTH.

"If ever
The queen of flowers, the boast of spring, the rose
Sprang from an envious briar, I may infer
There's such disparity in their conditions
Between the goddess of my soul, the daughter,
And the base churl, her father."

MASSINGER.

It has been more than once intimated to the reader that such and such a lady was not Dr. Campbell's model woman; moreover that gentleman, as has been seen, acknowledged to his companions, in Mr. Routledge's dining-room, that there was a woman whom, making allowances, of course, for human imperfections, he considered a pattern for her sex, but whose name, with instinctive delicacy, he forbore to reveal. However, as a confidential communication on the part of the writer of this history to the reader cannot possibly be offensive to the lady's feelings, we will at once state that she was no

other than Mrs. Davenport, wife of the lively, thoughtless vicar of Northwood, who, we hope, has not been forgotten. Mrs. Davenport, the model woman in body as well as in mind, of the disciple of Aristippus, was in the prime of life (for a matron at least), being twenty-nine. She was of the middle height, with a figure fully developed, as might be expected in a married woman who had had several children, but she was as far removed from corpulence on the one hand as she was from leanness on the other. Her form and face had a slightly voluptuous expression, owing to the extreme softness and brilliant whiteness of her skin, the fullness of her charming breast, the exquisite roundness of her finely-moulded limbs, and the melting and trusting expression of her full soft blue eye. But she was not accountable for the manner in which nature had made her body: her soul was pure; it struggled through and chastened down the whole. It is usual to compare a beautiful woman's flesh to marble, and alabaster, and wax, as if any of those substances could compete with that heavenly, soft, warm, swelling texture, with its scarcely visible threads of blue and pink, forming a reticulation too subtle, minute, and exquisite for us to dare to say we could describe it from inspection;—we fall back with reverence, and feebly endeavour to present an idea of the distant effect, confident that the most perfect delineation could not atone for the violation of nature's sanctities. There is nothing so fatal to female perfection as the slightest appearance of bone on the surface, or the least angularity in the position or movement of the limbs. As to Mrs. Davenport, that she had a bone in her body could only be discovered by the firmness and elasticity of her deportment and motions. And every sweep of her arm, every inclination and turn of her head traced some line of beauty on the circumambient air. Her complexion was a clear red and white, and her hair—if an ill-natured

person said it was red, a good-natured person could scarcely contradict him with any adherence to truth. And yet it was far from being what is commonly called red: it was a beautiful medium between flaxen and auburn; when you looked at it, even on the darkest day, you could not believe but that the sun was shining on it; it fell about her face like a shower of exquisitely crisped golden thread. Her mouth was small, as might be expected from a person with such hair and skin, but the lips were fuller than those which we generally see in such faces; nature seemed to take pleasure in making exceptions in her favour. Her well-placed head and swan-like neck gave her an air of dignity—a sweet feminine dignity—as remote from that of Juno as can well be imagined. It was impossible to look at her and speak to her and to doubt of the goodness of her temper; its sweetness breathed through every feature, before the sound of her voice turned conjecture into certainty. She had six children, and was, as we mentioned, twenty-nine, but she did not look more than three or four and twenty.

Although her personal endowments corresponded exactly with Dr. Campbell's *beau ideal* of what a woman should be physically, it was to her moral qualities that he referred, as may be remembered, at the dinner at Holly Park. Yet these qualities were in her very simple and unpretending, for it is only simple and unpretending virtues that women are called upon to exercise when they are expected to perform their duties in the most perfect manner. She stayed at home with her children and attended to all their wants, taught the elder what they were capable of learning, and trained those who were too young to be taught. Indeed, she scarcely ever went gadding about paying "morning visits," that most fruitful source of frivolous conversation, scandal, and idleness. But if any of her neighbours were in trouble, she was the

first to go to them, and was ready to sacrifice to them any home enjoyment, but no home duty. She was kind and charitable to the poor, and attentive to her school as far as she could be, without in the least neglecting the administration of affairs in that great home sphere which demands all a woman's heart and four-fifths of her time. She was devoted in her *duty* to her husband;—we are sorry to be obliged to use that ugly word in speaking of such a union as the connubial one, but Mr. Davenport was not the man of her choice, not the husband of her soul, nor the object of her deepest affections. Although acting thus uprightly, we cannot say she was perfectly happy; she was only at peace, in the consciousness that the path which she was quietly travelling along was the right path. No doubt many will say, "What a dull, commonplace character! how ludicrous to take the trouble of describing it!" Let those who speak thus observe the number of women who transgress the limits assigned to Mrs. Davenport, and then candidly confess that it is owing to the transgressing of those limits that we meet with so many monstrous anomalies among "the fair sex." It is also necessary to show the reader what a simple natural character satisfied the man who may have appeared so tyrannical in the restraints that he wished to impose upon women.

We have to add with regard to Mrs. Davenport, that she did not belong to any society, "ladies'" or otherwise, for promoting Christianity among either Jews or Gentiles; finding her energies taxed above their power to keep its influence dominant among her children and servants.

Such then was Amelia Warner, whom the Rev. Arthur Davenport had the felicity to call his, and in some respects he was worthy of such a treasure. He never contradicted her; nay, he approved of everything she said and did, and gave her as much power over his for-

tune as she could desire;—but these are compliments that may be extended to a paid housekeeper if she is clever and faithful. Well, then, let it be added that he adored her in his own frank, downright, unreserved manner. He lavished all sorts of tender epithets upon her, watched every change in her face lest she might be ill, had every servant in the house about her if she complained of being so, except the one who was commanded to fly for the doctor. He gave her more presents of clothes than she could possibly wear, consulted her on all matters, both those of which she was a judge, and those of which she was not; and finally he did not scruple to kiss her in presence of a third person, no matter who it might be. All this assorted very badly with her delicate and feeling nature. His love was not deep enough and far too boisterous, his assiduities encumbered rather than gratified her, and she often preferred suffering in silence to bearing the rush of his sympathy and the momentum of his assistance, if she complained of any mental or bodily derangement. When a gentle pressure of the hand, or the "least glance, better understood than words," would have reached her soul, she was met by a torrent of loving epithets; or when a few pious, feeling words would have gone far towards infusing a balm, problem after problem was propounded, the solution of which was to remove the immediate annoyance. She bore all this with patience and gratitude, for she knew it proceeded from the height of good-nature, and love too, which, although somewhat like tow on fire, yet never waned in its warmth and its flash. We can scarcely say

"Her heart was vacant though a splendid mansion,"

for she was so affectionate,—to love was such a necessity of her nature, that she would not refuse entrance to any, who, like her husband, with hearty desire knocked for admittance. The mansion, therefore, was not entirely with-

out an inhabitant, but its best chambers were certainly empty; there was none to occupy the most sumptuous and the most worthy halls in that sacred tenement. But this had not been always the case. There was one who long held the keys of its innermost *penetralia*, and that one was Dr. Campbell. But those times belonged to the days of romance;—no, we are wrong;—to the days when her life was most real,—when its elements met the responsive elements with which it was their nature to combine, and when perfect happiness was the product of the union. Now the "mansion" had fitted itself to its new inhabitant,—so she fancied, at least; Davenport and the Lares sat round the hearth, and Campbell and the Penates must be remembered no more.

It is necessary for us to turn back to some of the antecedents of Dr. Campbell, and the object of his early—ay, and of his everlasting worship, in order to render the subsequent portion of our narrative intelligible. And it must be acknowledged that our hero has hitherto occupied but a very modest space in our pages.

We hope Mr. Quill is a favourite; he is a necessary at any rate in this history, but—

> "Non omnes arbusta juvant humilesque myricæ.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Jam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;"

and never did a purer or lovelier virgin grace this earth than Amelia Warner, and never did the Saturnian kingdom return to earth with more reality than when she and her lover

> "Lived together deep in woods,
> Unseen as sings the nightingale,"

before the rough world came and washed all the rich colouring of the picture away, and left nothing remaining but the hard outline.

Mr. Warner's estate was contiguous to a small town in

Sussex, of which town Dr. Campbell's father was the principal physician; and the humble garden of the doctor, who lived in the suburbs, was separated by a narrow lane from the extensive park of the squire.

Amelia Warner was an only child, and Robert Campbell was in the same circumstances, so they naturally fell into one another's company; the nurses, on both sides, taking the two lovely children to play together in the lane while they took the opportunity of gossiping with one another. They generally adjourned from this common ground into the respective premises of each, but the garden was found too small and the park was soon preferred. Mrs. Warner was dead, and the servants in charge of Amelia gave her as much of her own way as she pleased to take, so that she had perfect liberty, whenever she chose, to bring "Master Robert, papa's doctor's son," to walk and play with her for hours among the interminable groves and alleys of Mr. Warner's noble demesne.

Robert's father, while strongly attached to his son, was an austere, forbidding man; the boy had no companions, he did not go to school; his father, an excellent scholar, taught him everything at home—it was a fancy of his; he entertained a great prejudice against large boarding-schools, and the Latin day-school in the town where he lived he looked upon with sovereign contempt. Robert was a reserved, shy boy, with fine feelings and affections that had never been called forth, (for his mother, too, had died when he was a baby); great then was his relief and joy, when the dry, dull lesson was over, to escape from the paternal ferule to this gentle, affectionate little girl, who was watching for him every afternoon at the park gate, ready to show him some new-found treasure; some nest with eggs differently speckled from any she had ever seen before; some flower of which he could surely tell her the name, or some tree that she might

climb with his assistance; or some new book that she would not open until he was ready to read it with her under the shade of the horse-chesnut. Then they wandered hand-in-hand through the woods and meadows, and he would pluck wild flowers aud make a garland, and place it on her magnificent hair, and marvel at the celestial expression it gave to her exquisite countenance. Or they would sit down on the grass, and he would put his arm round her waist in a protecting, brotherly manner, and make her repeat a ballad of Shenstone after him, and promise she would not have forgotten it when they met the next day. And so things went on, until they both drew near the verge of the serious portion of human life, and she became surrounded by masters, and he was beginning to be initiated into the mysteries of the profession for which he was designed, and in a lonely hot attic, he sat face to face with a skeleton, and slowly learned his bones; and she, in a large, gloomy parlour, sat staring at the notes in a music-book, and striking the responsive keys on a piano; and both were thinking, not of what they were engaged in, but of one another. But the greater was their rapture when they met in the park in the evening; and, it must be confessed, that many an hour in the pleasant afternoons, when the stern doctor thought his son was locked up in the attic intent on his dry studies, and when her masters supposed she was practising a difficult lesson in music which she was expected to have perfect against the next visit, or that she was deep in a hard French exercise—they were both wandering far beyond the precincts of the pleasure-grounds, remote from the eyes of masters and fathers, in the blessed interchange of the innocent heart's first love and the unsophisticated heart's fresh sentiments. As she grew older, he brought out books for them to read, in the fields, of more depth and feeling than Shenstone—he brought

Goldsmith, and Thomson, and Wordsworth. These were the commentaries on their sylvan existence. The first gave them a series of exquisite pictures, in which they saw themselves and all about them painted to the life, in the most heart-touching hues; the second showed them rural scenes in attitudes and combinations and life-like groups, which their young minds could scarcely have caught without the assistance of the master's hand; but the third was the high-priest of nature; he applied her mysteries to their souls, regenerating and rousing them to new insight and new energies, and deeper holiness, with all the influence of a sacramental system. Tennyson had not yet penetrated to their retired habitation, he was to come in after times with a terrible teaching which they now little anticipated they should ever require. Robert never allowed Byron or Moore to form any part of her studies; he would not corrupt her by giving her book-lessons in love as an art and a passion; it was to spring up in her heart as simply and naturally as the butter-cups did under her feet in May; she was to love him because she could not help doing so—because he was the unit necessary to make up the sum total of her existence; he was to be to her what she was to him; as indispensable an adjunct as warmth is to life—the existence of one, without the other, was to be as impossible as the existence of motion without space. The intensity of her love was to be according to the suggestions and impulses of her nature; warm or calm it might be in proportion to her temperament, but it certainly was not to be artificially inflamed by the outpourings of a poet's prurient imagination.

He not only read, but sang for her, as they sat by the bank of a river, or under the trees. He had always the same divine voice that we have noticed as sending an arrow through the tender heart of Lady Caroline—making

the lively, rattling Charles Routledge weep—making the phlegmatic Maria Neville, who was too proud to weep, tremble,—and exciting the elderly Mrs. Neville to audible sobs. The songs were generally of his own composition; simple and sweet, always expressing the love he bore for her. As he sang them, he would watch her face in hopes of tracing some deep expression, some responsive glance, intimating that she felt and accepted of his homage; but ingenuous affection and innocent delight were all that beamed from her features as yet; he was nearly four years older than she was, and the passion was of course first developed in him. From their childhood he had been in the habit of kissing her every day when they met, and she received the salute with cordial simplicity. However, one day, when she was nearly fifteen, on his embracing her as usual, she blushed scarlet; then he perceived that a change had come over her soul, and he hailed that moment as the happiest of his life, but he said nothing. The next day when she approached him, he blushed himself, and trembled very much, and did not kiss her; they walked and talked together as usual, but neither seemed perfectly at ease. The following day when they met, she threw herself into his arms. It was all over—they understood one another now. That embrace was a long one. When they recovered, the solemn vows that man makes to woman, and woman to man, were plighted;—they were no longer children. Then their life assumed a new character,—there was a short period of intoxicating bliss. Then Robert Campbell, with his nice tact and fine intellect, studied her and watched over her, as the treasure that belonged solely to him; and that he would mould and fashion so as to make her one with himself in tastes and pursuits, as in soul and body. Well did he understand her gentle, trusting, affectionate nature; he knew she was one who would ever require firm support and judicious encourage-

ment; he knew in what manner every balm was to be administered, and how necessary to her happiness was the strong, fervent, but quiet devotion of a kindred heart.

Besides their private interviews, they often met at her father's table, for the elder Campbell was a great favourite with Mr. Warner, who considered he had saved his life twice; once in an inflammation, and again after he had got a dangerous fall out hunting. The son, after he ceased to be a boy, was generally invited along with his father;—nothing was known, nothing suspected.

Between the memorable day on which, as they thought, their happiness was sealed, and another day—to be marked with a very different colour,—ten months elapsed. During that period the mind of Amelia Warner had been rapidly developed. The seriousness, the tenderness, the delicacy of feeling, and the ripened judgment, that distinguish the mature female from the growing girl, were all hers. In person, too, she appeared quite a woman. Her eyes had become more brilliant, her features more strongly marked, and her figure was swelling into some of the richness and symmetry which it exhibited to perfection at a later period. Her lover, too, might be now called a man. He was past nineteen, and a more interesting specimen of male beauty could not possibly be seen. We have described him already, but we may add that certain changes which suffering had made in his face, were now far distant, and the animation of his splendid eyes and the brightness of his happy young countenance were such as no woman could look upon with indifference; by Amelia he was contemplated with a mixture of love and reverence approaching to the purest worship. They had formed no plans with regard to the secret that must sooner or later be revealed to their parents; they raved on in their intoxicating dream, keeping the reality as far distant as possible.

One evening, at the end of September, Amelia was

standing silently in the recess of a deep window in the dining-room, while her father was sitting at the table over his claret. There was no third person in the room. Mr. Warner was a coarse-minded, rough man, rising into the savage on a little excitement. He loved his daughter strongly, not tenderly: he wished to make her happy, not by permitting her to indulge her own tastes and affections, but in conformity to his definition of the word happiness. His predominant passion was pride, which, in him, was paramount to every other feeling. He had neither learning nor the faculty of appreciating it; he thought it a very good outfit for persons who had to earn their bread, and were not, like him, princes on a small scale, for such he considered extensive landed proprietors. The good old feudal times were, in his opinion, the wisest; the world was gone crazy, but he himself would keep within the bounds of sanity as long as possible, and oblige all depending on him to do the same. Amelia scarcely ever spoke to him until he spoke first to her, so as usual he now commenced.

"Do you listen to me for a moment, young lassie. You have grown quite tall and full of late; in short, you are almost a woman, and I think it is time to speak to you a little about your own affairs. As I have nothing but you, I am fond and proud enough of you, and I hope you deserve it. But fond as I am of you, I cannot leave you my large landed property; that is settled on male heirs only, it must go to my brother Sandy's son. Never mind though; I have made a good provision for you; what with a part of your mother's fortune, and a charge on the estate, you will have thirty thousand pounds, and that is not bad for a young lady, with very good looks too, though you have a carroty head." (The profane wretch!) "So I expect you will make an excellent match some of these days. But mind now,—it will not do to have you always going on in that tom-boy manner."

She gave a look of unfeigned astonishment;—she a tom-boy! what could he mean?

"Don't you understand me? It did very well while you were a little child to be playing and romping with that son of Dr. Campbell's, but I am quite astonished that you can go on still racketing and knocking about the fields with him, as you did when you were in frocks and pinafores. I know you walk with him every day when I am taken up with other matters. People are beginning to notice it, for he, too, is no child now;—grown a great, long, scrawley fellow;—let me see how old he is:—born, I well remember, in eighteen hundred and—— Fire and faggots! there are many who marry at that age!"

If he had watched her face from the time he had first begun to speak of Robert, he might have guessed there was something very suspicious going on between them; the changes from crimson to deadly white proceeding with a rapidity of alternation that resembled the magical movements of a conjuror. But he had a trick of looking at his boots while he was speaking, particularly if he was saying anything that was not very agreeable to his hearers. However, at last he suddenly did look up, and finding her in the pale stage, was much frightened.

"What the plague ails you? sit down directly on that chair. I'm not scolding you; there is no giving you a word of good advice, you are so nervous. I am only saying that, although I know these Campbells are very good sort of people in their own way,—and though the father is a capital hand at physicking, and bleeding, and blistering when a man requires it,—and though I doubt not the son will succeed very well in the same line, and maintain himself respectably, yet you must leave the young chap to mind his bones and mummies, and ply his pestle and mortar, and you must have no more hoydening with him. I have consulted Mrs. Rowley, of Castle Hill,

about a companion for you," (it was that lady indeed, who had given him the hint that his daughter's walks with Robert were beginning to be noticed, and on which information he was now acting) "and she has recommended a most accomplished young lady, perfectly able to finish you in your music and such things, and also to instruct you how to do the honours of this house; for in a couple of years you will be the mistress of my establishment, and you must be drilled, you know; so I am going to write and engage her, and I expect she will be a perfect blessing to you." (If Mrs. Rowley had prescribed the "perfect blessing" six years before, she would have done still better.) "She will drive out with you, and walk with you—for observe, you are never to walk out without her, and a far more suitable companion she will be than that maudlin jackanapes."

Here poor Amelia could no longer restrain herself, but burst into tears. Now the father abhorred a scene, it made him feel awkward and foolish, as is generally the case with people who are without much feeling and delicacy, and suddenly find themselves in a situation where an infusion of both is required.

"What the devil is all this about? Here, take a glass of claret immediately." He compelled her to take the wine. "Why, I am doing everything I can plan for your good, and you——"

"Oh, papa, I am not going to make the least opposition to any of your new regulations, only don't call *him* names; indeed he does not deserve it."

"Names! I was not calling him names; I should be very sorry to treat his father's son in such a manner; how little you know what it is to call names! I never heard anything bad of him,—a quiet looby; not very sprightly, certainly."

She rose to quit the room. He pondered for a moment, and a thought seemed to strike him.

"Come back here!"

She sat down again.

"Now I would not on any account ask you to marry a person you did not like. I don't want to make you unhappy. I could, if I chose, oblige you to marry your cousin Tom Warner, who is to inherit this estate, and I know he would like it of all things himself,—and my grandson would ultimately succeed to my fine property,—and this would be the fondest wish of my heart,—but I give it all up, for I am aware you have no fancy for Tom. But this is the utmost stretch that I can go to; I love you as I do my life,—you may not think so,—for I am not a person for petting and slobbering,—but I do love you;—and still,—if such a thing came into your head,—I can't believe it though; but if you were so infatuated as to marry that gallipot fellow, I would certainly shoot you. I might shoot myself afterwards, but anything before dishonour! You may go now."

A word was enough: she flew to her room, and there indulged in such passionate floods of tears, that the emptying out of her breast was complete enough to bring her the calm and relief that she would have derived from a moral change of circumstances. She then put on her bonnet and shawl, and ran through the park, got over the wall, by means of a stile, and alighted in the lane. There stood her lover, at the outside of his garden door. Although it was nearly dark, he saw by a glance at her face that she was in some great distress. He caught her in his arms, and nearly carried her into the garden.

"My father is with a patient, and can't be back for some time; come into the summer-house and tell me what ails you."

He placed her on the seat and sat down by her. She threw her arms round his neck, and pressed her face to his in a closer embrace than she had ever indulged him in

before, and wept long and passionately. He said nothing; but held her clasped to his breast until she should recover strength to speak. At last she said:—

"All is come to an end; we are to meet no more. Papa has engaged a governess to spy me and follow me, and never leave me, and besides, he says that if I marry you he will shoot me."

"Shoot you!" repeated Robert; "don't you know you are mine? he had better not meddle with my treasure, or *I* will shoot *him*."

"Oh, what is the use of speaking in that way?" she cried; "I am his child, and he has full power over me—not to shoot me, I know, but to keep me from you, for you are not my husband yet; ah, if you were!"

"Why do you say I am not your husband? is it because we took our oaths to be one, in the woods, and not in a stone building? We vowed before God, who inhabits a field as much as he does a church. I know nature gave you to your father to rear and to bring up; that is accomplished now, and God has given you to me."

"But are not nature and God the same, dearest Robert?" she said, raising her head from his shoulder, on which it was resting, and looking in his face.

"There is one Great First Cause," answered he, "but in the complicated chain of effects, there are certain operations going on, one of which I call nature, and the other God. Nature acts by instincts and blind motions, but we seem to see God acting transparently with wisdom and design. He brings together, from every part of his creation, the spirits that he knows are congenial to one another, and he cements them in a union that is to last for ever. When fathers die, there is an end of the connexion between them and their children, but our souls are to be united until the stars drop from their orbit. You are mine by

right divine, and let human power strive against that if it can."

Such were his audacious words, as he pressed upon her soft cheek his beautiful mouth, rough with the tokens of incipient manhood. He was fearfully excited, and she lay helpless in his arms. Heaven knows how that interview might have ended, but Heaven seemed to come to her relief. She heard a noise and started up.

"I am here contrary to papa's wishes, but I could not forbear coming to tell you what had happened. Perhaps he has found out where I am, and has sent a servant—— oh, Heaven! perhaps he is coming himself!"

She sprang out of the arbour into the garden; he followed her.

"The two garden-doors are locked, and no one can come in either from the lane or from the yard. Since you say you are not mine, you shall become mine now, in spite of every one—in spite of yourself."

He scarcely knew what he was saying, so overwhelmed was he by the news she had communicated. He took her in his arms and carried her back to the arbour. . . . . Suddenly a horse's tramp was heard in the yard.

"Mercy!" he cried, "my father back already!"

"Oh, let me go home!" she exclaimed.

He raised her, and conducted her to the door leading into the lane.

"You come here to-morrow morning early," said he, "and we will settle what we are to do."

She promised. He kissed her again passionately, and at last let her depart. She darted over the wall, and away through the park. He stood like one turned to stone, but still gazing after her. At last she disappeared. It was many a day before he saw her again. When she reached the house it was quite dark. She avoided the front door, and running into the yard was hurrying in at

the back door, hoping to gain her own room by the back stairs. But just there she met her father, who was going to see a favourite horse that was ill.

"Out so late! what can be the meaning of this?"

The answer was so incoherent and confused that he guessed all. She was ordered to her apartment, and her tea was sent up to her. She felt a strange terror, although glad not to be summoned into the paternal presence. The next morning, on endeavouring to open her door, she found to her amazement that it was locked. Shortly after it was opened by Mr. Warner himself, who informed her that she was to remain a prisoner for a time. He added nothing more; he did not attempt to "preach down her heart" with a "little hoard of maxims." In these cases silent force is certainly the most merciful line of conduct; so far he spared her. Putting the key of her room in his pocket, he went off to Campbell senior, and asked him whether it was with his connivance that this intercourse between their children had been carried on. Dr. Campbell—well aware that if he wanted to ruin his son he could take no better measures for doing so than by encouraging him to aspire to the hand of Miss Warner, and convinced that if a report went abroad that he and his son were seeking to entrap the young lady in an engagement, he should lose whatever business he had—was thunderstruck on hearing such a question put to him, and solemnly disclaimed all knowledge of what he termed "the nefarious proceeding." He then offered to prove his sincerity by pursuing any course that Mr. Warner might please to dictate.

"Then he quits this country for a considerable period," said Mr. Warner. "Is not London the fittest place for him, where he can have a rattling supply of bones, and bagfuls of carcasses to his heart's content?"

The proud doctor considered he was of as old a family

as Mr. Warner, and personally his superior in everything but wealth; so with all his dependence on patronage he could not brook this brutal allusion.

"I suppose, sir, it is the same to you whether he pursues the painful studies necessary to his profession, or goes to Caffraria, provided he is banished from here. It has been a matter of great regret and anxiety to me that he did not go to London two years ago to attend the hospitals, as he should have done; but the delicacy of his chest, as I think I once told you, rendered it dangerous. He has now done growing, and seems much improved in health, so I had made up my mind to send him to town this autumn."

"Yes, yes; pack him off, pack him off; and as quickly as possible too, for, mind—she is to be kept locked up until he vanishes."

"To-night, sir."

Mr. Warner went home satisfied. Robert heard his doom in silence; what could he say or do? He was aware that he was to be soon sent to London, but he little expected his departure would be preceded by such a rupture as this. His father was dark and stern, but he could not forbear putting a question or two. The son acknowledged the attachment. The answer was brief:—

"It must be crushed—crushed—crushed."

While the unhappy young man was preparing for his departure, his father scarcely lost sight of him for a moment, so he had not a possibility of writing a line to Milly, as he called her, or if he had, there was no mode of getting it conveyed to her prison.

That evening the two Campbells set off in the mail for London, as the father wished to see his son comfortably settled in lodgings, and to introduce him to the hospital.

So his dream was ended; he was torn from his idol, his poetry, his heroes of Greece and Rome, and launched

into the most trying of all professions; he had commenced the march of life on a very rough road indeed.

The morning after his departure, Mr. Warner entered his daughter's apartment, and informed her that young Campbell was gone away for years, and that his name was never to be mentioned again. She was taken violently ill, and was confined to her room much longer than her father intended. But why should we dwell on the period of torture that these two young creatures passed through?

There are such dark spots in many a life, but this seemed the blackest that had ever yet defaced the morning of existence. Their souls had been knit together for so many years, and the wrench had been so sudden, so complete, so hopeless. Were those men justified in what they did? Have fathers and mothers a right, on account of a small difference in rank, or the prospect of narrow means, to drive to desolation and madness two beings, their equals in every quality of mind and body, their superiors, perhaps, in intellectual endowments, and who have been attracted to one another by the great divine law that preserves every body in creation in its proper place? I say without hesitation, they have not. The nearest ties of blood, and the possession of the most unquestionable authority, do not give one human being a right to break the heart of another human being. "Une petite affaire du cœur." "Near becoming a serious matter." "As yet a childish fancy." So the light jest goes round among the gossiping neighbours. It is no laughing matter to break the heart of your fellow-creature; to send him or her down the stream of life linked to a being he does not love (for nature drives them to seek some other helpmate), stretching out the sick hand and straining the sick eye towards the being he does love, who is going down the stream too, visible but not tan-

gible, with a bottomless gulf placed between the pair. Are they to be sent off together to starve then? No: constituted as society now is, no person of upright conduct, earnest will, and common sense, is in the least danger of starving. He may descend a few degrees from the position he held at his birth; he may be even obliged to follow a vocation in which "the gentry" will not "visit" him: and now set that against the affections blasted, and the soul harmed. I write the two last words advisedly; there is no more likely guide to scepticism than a broken heart to begin the world on. We all know what good humour happy, successful people are in with life, and fortune, and Providence; how highly favoured they think they are by the Supreme Power, and how ready they are to accept all the difficulties of a system of which they form such a cherished item. How amazingly religious we often find two well-matched beings who are perfectly attached to one another! All is right at the centre, and they kindly extend their laws to the periphery, and find all the moral machine that is wheeling about them an apparatus of harmony. But it is very different with those who are shivering under a blast and a ban. Their movement is towards despair, and despair is a very bad auxiliary to befriend us in an effort to receive dark and irreconcilable doctrines,—stern dogmas that war with the moral sense, and offend the human notion of justice. In our sullen depression we say—"Are not these things like our destiny, gloomy, crushing, unfair?" Prostration is a bad prop to faith. Where is the guiding hand? Where the watchful eye that never sleeps? We grope about for them; we cannot apprehend them. The stream has been poisoned at the source, and as it glides through the meadow it penetrates to the roots of the tender green plants that are growing on its margin, and turns their bloom to ashes. There is no end to the

dark, and probably often erroneous arguments of misery. We read lately of an eminent author who, having lost three children, renounced all belief in an overruling Providence. We are not going to justify such impatient and shallow reasoning,—we give it as an instance of the tendency of many minds under repeated blows. Whether we approve of such sentiments or not, there they stand,—positive realities.

We offer these remarks as mere germs of thought to the reader; we are writing a narrative, and action not thought is our province.

Action went on very slowly indeed, for the next three years with poor Amelia Warner. The governess arrived, and the finishing process of her education commenced. She was kept close to her French, Italian, and music, and she did whatever she was desired. She seemed to have no energies, no likings nor dislikings; she went on in the manner of a machine. The governess could not complain of her, but so melancholy a case she declared had never been placed in her hands before. If she did go out, she could never be got to walk in her father's park or gardens; she would take exercise on the roads or not at all. She preferred going in the carriage; she would then lie back on the seat with her eyes half shut; the governess sitting by her in wondering silence. That she did not indeed die under this horrible change in her lot can only be accounted for on the supposition that protracted life is the penalty for our offences on some occasions, as death is the sentence on others. From the first she totally renounced all hope of Robert Campbell; she knew what Mr. Warner was,—impracticable, iron-willed; she saw that his pride had risen up in all its fierceness against the humble doctor's son, and she was well aware that such pride as his could not be laid by any human spell, could not be mollified by any amount of mortal suffering. He would

let her die, she knew, and then perhaps breathe his last sob on her coffin. His death in the common course of nature, leaving her mistress of her fortune, was the only inlet to hope. But he was not more than forty-eight, and, besides, she was too amiable and affectionate ever to look forward to such a termination to her misery. She could not contemplate an approach to happiness over the corpse of her parent. So she quietly gave Robert up.

As to him, he had plenty to do, and was obliged to do it. He was thrown among crowds of fellow-students, and tried with them what they called pleasure, and found it ended in nothing but shame and bitterness. He mixed in scenes and passed through ordeals that might well have banished that one loved idea from his mind,—but no: he clung to it obstinately. In his theology he saw her placed in his path by the Unseen Hand, as the being appointed for his eternal partner, and though separated from her for a time, he fancied he heard a voice in every breeze whispering:—

"Connubio jungam stabili propriamque dicabo."

This supported him; he went into company too:—

"Before him pass'd the young and fair
In pleasure's glittering train."

Ladies of every description looked kindly on him, but none that he saw pleased him; they were artificial, conventional, cold; he had left one that was all heart, purity, ingenuousness; that knew nothing but what he had taught her; whose face was the mirror of the mind that he had formed; who looked upon him as her all—her father, brother, lover, husband; every tender epithet that expresses every kind of feeling was gathered up by her and condensed into one unutterable word which spoken language could not reach, but which he could read in her

heavenly blue eye. So he passed coldly through society with his heart in another sphere; the young men called him the handsome misogynist; the young ladies admired him, spread their nets for him, failed, pronounced him a riddle, and winged their flight after more profitable game. Campbell never made any attempt to get a letter conveyed to Miss Warner; his father had apprized him that every despatch addressed to the young lady would be first delivered into the hands of her father; and if he was discovered to be clandestinely corresponding with her, they, father and son, would both be ruined. Robert was satisfied; he was convinced that Destiny was preserving her for him, and he left Destiny to take her own way. It is wonderful what virtue we think a word becomes possessed of, when we take it into our head to spell it with a capital letter, and to apply to it a pronoun of the masculine or feminine gender.

He was an alien from his father's house; that too he did not mind; between him and his sire there was little sympathy.

Besides mastering his profession he studied French, Italian, and music, that he might be a more complete companion for her, when they should meet to part no more.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A SUCCESSFUL PLOT.

"I am not mad;—I wish to heaven I were,
For then 'tis like I should forget myself;
Preach some philosophy to make me mad,
And thou shalt be canonised, Cardinal."

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Miss Warner was nineteen, her father took her to Bath and Cheltenham, and introduced her to society. He would have taken her earlier, but he found it impossible to rouse her to any exertion before this time. London was carefully avoided; young Campbell was there; the vast city itself, it seems, was too small a place to trust her in with that terrible man. She was much admired; and besides her beauty it was well known she was to have a large fortune, so she was greatly sought after. During the season in Cheltenham, whither they removed after a winter in Bath, a baronet proposed for her, and an honourable was on the point of doing so had she given him any encouragement. Other persons too, of fortune and family, would have been at her feet but for her invincible coldness. She had not made any vows of celibacy, she simply cared for no one. Her father was frantic at the "matches she had let slip through her fingers," and this, joined to her extreme dullness and disrelish for all that forms the delight of other young people, made him suspect that she

was on the high road to becoming mad. He called in a doctor famous for curing insanity, and who kept a very select private establishment for afflicted ladies. The doctor, as in duty bound, announced that the nervous system was in an alarming state of derangement, and that she might get into an unpleasant melancholy, at least, if precautions were not taken. She was to be amused as much as possible; the great point was to get her to take interest in something.

"Why, sir," roared the father, "I spend shoals of money striving to amuse her, and she won't be amused. I get her dogs and birds; I get her new music to learn; I get her drawings to copy;—but it is all of no use; she will not take interest in anything."

The doctor delicately hinted that a matrimonial alliance might set everything right. This was a sore subject.

"Odds boddikins, man, if she kicks the fellows downstairs as fast as they come after her, what the vengeance am I to do? I know very well the sort of thing you mention would make a woman of her, but I should have given you notice that the reason I think her mad, and sent for you, was, she is going on in such a way towards the men. She sent a wealthy baronet about his business a few weeks ago, and one morning very lately she dragged off her bonnet, and would not go out to walk for the entire day because a viscount's son, a captain in the —— Hussars, asked permission to accompany her. Now if that is not coming very near the straight waistcoat, I'm sure I don't know what is."

"My dear sir, do not speak of such a thing as a straight waistcoat! all that cruelty has been abandoned long ago; nothing in our asylums now but the greatest tenderness and indulgence."

"Well, then, I am deuced sorry for it. Nothing like a little tying and whipping to bring people to their senses."

It was something new to the doctor to hear of a young lady who required to be tied and whipped into matrimony; he scarcely knew how to deal with the case; he regretted his patient was so recalcitrant; when she met a congenial spirit, no doubt she would surrender; in the mean time if she was taken to travel, it might awaken a new train of ideas. Then she was asked to choose any country in Europe that she would like to visit, and she was told she should be taken there. This proposal she refused in the most determined manner; anything like exertion and movement was revolting to her. The doctor said that of course she was not to be forced to do anything against her will; that would only increase the incipient malady. So at Cheltenham she was kept quietly, under the care of the insanity doctor; her father also watched her closely; one more offer refused, and the straight waistcoat and the lash would be inevitable.

Just at this time Mr. Davenport turned up at Cheltenham. He had come there for a little recreation, having got leave of absence from a curacy that he held at Malvern. He was, as we have already hinted, a very showy preacher, famous in the department of charity sermons; of a commanding, graceful figure and brilliant face, and with most fascinating manners when his spirits were not too exuberant. He was in the full glow of youth, and ardent with poetical religion. Now if there exists, in all the range of society, a remedy capable of meeting such a case as Miss Warner's, it is to be found in the handsome, *devoted* young curate, remarkable for preaching the most *feeling* charity sermons. Mr. Davenport's talents were not permitted to lie dormant long; solicited on every side, he first appeared in the pulpit of one of the parish churches, to advocate the cause of an "Asylum for Unfortunate Females," the funds of which were very low. A subject better suited to his style could not have been found. He

was superb. He "who can count the dust of Jacob" might have courage to tell over the number of pocket-handkerchiefs that were in requisition, not only among ladies but among gentlemen, on that grand occasion.

But Miss Warner's emotion far exceeded that of any other person. She was carried fainting out of church just as the young preacher concluded the following passage.

"And would the hand of chastity and beauty refuse to extend the healing balm to a prostrate, suffering, fallen sister—once, perhaps, as pure, as lovely, as immaculate, as tenderly and honourably beloved, as any of the bright beings who have been now worshipping in this temple, and who will return to homes hallowed by the wing of peace, perfumed by the breath of virtue, and to whose ear the cry of innocent confidence trampled upon might never have penetrated, did not my unworthy tongue this day plead for betrayed helplessness—oh! say not, plead in vain."

At the close, his kindling eye met the gaze of Amelia Warner, who was sitting in a pew opposite to the pulpit. The young lady being conveyed home, the insanity doctor was immediately sent for. He pronounced the fainting a magnificent symptom; her capacity for feeling and admiring had been called back to life; her heart had been stirred; she was safe not to go mad.

"Only it must be followed up," said he in conclusion.

"What do you mean?" cried the father.

"They must be brought together," answered the doctor.

"What? my child marry a curate!"

"Your child marries whom she likes, or pines in an asylum. Act, sir, act! The young man is of excellent family, and has some property; your daughter has refused worldly rank and style; give her what her heart warms to—a zealous, eloquent, servant of the Lord—or you may rue the consequences."

The father considered within himself:—

"Anything to save her from the madhouse, or that ruffian, young Campbell; she will surely be at him some day or other." He proposed to go up and ask his daughter whether she desired Mr. Davenport's acquaintance.

"No, sir! if you do she will refuse; fling him into her presence without warning, and she will succumb without reflection."

It was settled that Mr. Warner should write a few complimentary lines to Mr. Davenport, enclosing a ten pound note, and saying that it was to be applied to the charity of which Mr. Davenport had been such a splendid advocate (the words "splendid advocate" had been suggested by the doctor, with the high approbation of Mr. Warner); that as his daughter had left the church unwell before the plate was handed about, she was deprived of the *privilege* (the doctor's word too) of depositing her mite upon it, but could not think of letting *such* a charity suffer by her indisposition.

"And is not 'her mite' a neat hit of mine, doctor?" said Mr. Warner.

"Capital!" answered the insanity doctor.

So proceeded the conspiracy against the unfortunate Campbell. It was finally settled that the joint production of the two intellects should not be sent to Mr. Davenport until the next day, as this was Sunday. The doctor then departed. When Mr. Warner was left alone, he relieved himself by pouring out a volley of mental curses against Robert Campbell, who had brought him to such a pass as to have to solicit a curate for his only child; for he was beginning to suspect at last that it was some lingering love for this "spooney" that made his daughter so dull and so unlike other girls, and that brought her to look so coldly on men whom everyone else thought "first-rate matches."

He became convinced that if she was not yet mad, this

moping and brooding over a single idea would soon render her so; and to his horror he recollected that his wife's aunt had died in a lunatic asylum, and that his wife herself had been, to say the least of her, "devilish hard to manage." (It was he who had been hard to manage, and his provoking and boorish conduct helped to shorten her life, for she was a beautiful, nervous, fragile creature.) If his daughter were to like the parson, after turning her back on the baronet and the honourable hussar, why—it would be scarcely better than madness breaking out in another form, yet not quite so dangerous; so, as things had come to this deplorable state he must make the best of them. He then went to the drawing-room, where he found Amelia lying on the sofa, pretty comfortable; and on his inquiring how she liked the sermon and the preacher, she described both, and descanted on the former with an animation that she had not displayed for some years. It seemed as if Mr. Davenport had descended from the sky into that pulpit to dazzle and entrance her.

The doctor on his part was determined to do all he could to "bring about a match" between the parties. He knew right well that Miss Warner was in a perfectly sound state of mind, but a little depressed, probably owing to some lingering *penchant* that she would not of course confess to him; he also was perfectly aware that he could at any time persuade Mr. Warner that she was a little touched in the head, and that he could get her into his asylum labelled with "three hundred a year;" but he was not an unprincipled schemer, and he scorned such an act; so he thought the next most profitable thing he could do for himself would be to aid with all his power in promoting this alliance, for he doubted not, if matters turned out successfully, and if the young lady were made a cheerful, smiling bride, through any agency of his, Mr. Warner's gratitude would be unbounded, and his fee in proportion.

And finally we must do him the justice to add that he took an unusual interest in his amiable and beautiful patient, and would be happy to see her restored to health and spirits, even without any personal emolument in view.

So on Monday morning he went to the news-room, where he heard that Mr. Davenport read the papers every day, and having subscribed for a week, went up-stairs and seated himself near the young clergyman. A gentleman of his acquaintance came up and recommended to him to read an able speech the home-secretary had made at a public dinner.

"Impossible!" said the doctor; "I cannot stay here more than a few minutes; I am engaged to go at eleven o'clock to see a young lady who was taken out of —— church yesterday very ill."

Davenport's quick eye fell on him.

"I beg pardon, sir, but you are Dr. B——, I believe.'

"Yes, sir."

"I have heard a great deal of you," continued Davenport; "so you are attending Miss——"

"Warner," said the doctor.

"Oh, yes; I forgot her name; I heard it yesterday from the curate of the church where I preached, for of course I asked him whether he knew the name of the lady who fainted. I hope she is better," said Davenport.

"Yes, nearly recovered, but I am to see her to-day, notwithstanding; her father is so miserable about her;—an only child;—no one else to inherit his great property."

"Ha!" said Davenport, "and she seems a very pretty girl too, as well as I could see."

"A lovely creature! but her mind,—that's the thing! so well regulated! such high principles!"

"And does she succeed to Mr. Warner's estates?" said Davenport, carelessly.

"Something in that way; either the estate or an im-

mense fortune in cash; but one does not think of those things when convinced as I am of her deep and unaffected piety."

"Well, of course one does not;" said the young curate; "where does the property lie?"

"Somewhere in Sussex. She is *so* alive to the woes and wants of the wretched! your appeal yesterday affected her greatly."

Davenport blushed.

"Ho, ho!" thought the doctor; "set a faint to a blush, and I will be bound they'll go together as charmingly as any music and words that were ever matched." He then went to Mr. Warner's, and ascertained that the letter and bank-note had been sent.

The next morning he called again and found Mr. Warner much excited. "Doctor, here is a note from Mr. Davenport, asking permission to call and thank my daughter in person for her handsome donation."

"Just what I expected he would do;—has she consented to see him?"

"Yes, she seemed pleased, so I returned an answer that we should be happy to see him this afternoon, and here I am waiting to receive him; so far right, isn't it?"

"To be sure. When he comes you must take him upstairs and introduce him, but you need not stay in the room the whole time."

"Why, dash it, man! do you think he will pop the question the very first day?"

"Of course I don't; but young people get better acquainted with one another when we old stagers are not sitting by listening to every word they say." In fact, the doctor was afraid that if Mr. Warner remained long in the room he might come blurting out with something that would disgust Davenport before he had time to fall in love with the daughter.

"She is certainly more in her right mind for the last two days than she has been for a long time," said the father; "so let me see; I lug him up stairs, sit for about ten minutes talking religion, and then bolt."

"That would be too pointed," said the doctor; "I will stay here in the parlour, and in a short time I will send the servant up to say that a gentleman wants you; then there will be nothing marked in your leaving the room. And you need not speak of religion if it does not come in happily."

"Why, I'm not accustomed to parsons; I thought one should be always talking to them of their business." Here a double knock was heard, and Mr. Davenport having been admitted, Mr. Warner hastened to the hall, and having introduced himself, conducted him up-stairs.

The doctor stood at the parlour window with his watch in his hand.

"I can certainly give him but five minutes, or he will say something outlandish about religion, by way of pleasing the young man. But no; I must allow ten, to let the girl gather a little courage before the *tête-à-tête* commences." So in ten minutes the man was sent up, but five more elapsed, and Mr. Warner did not make his appearance. The doctor grew quite alarmed. At last he came into the parlour looking pleased, and a little softened.

"Well, well, how are matters going on?" inquired the doctor.

"Oh, stunningly! she is smiling and talking to him. I vow I don't think she ever smiled since that infernal hound—I mean 'tis almost three years since she smiled to my knowledge, and now that she does, she looks so like her mother! I'd have been down before, only I was sitting there like a fool staring at her."

"You did not say much?" ventured the doctor.

"Why no: I thought it better to give her all she'd take."

"Far better," thought the doctor.

The father continued. "And what do you think they are talking about now? Of psalms; and I should not wonder if she played for him. There's that grand piano that I am paying ever so much a month for, and she cannot be got to touch it. So he looked at it and asked her whether she was fond of music, and she said she was, and then he hoped she approved of the psalms that were sung on Sunday, for it was he who selected them; one was 'Wash out my foul offence,' and I forget the other. But the rogue did not ask her how she liked the sermon, though I'm sure he was longing to do so."

"Of course he would not ask her that question," said the doctor.

"By George, then I was going to tell him how it worked her up, only you sent for me."

"It was a mercy I did," thought the doctor. Here a faint sound of music reached their ears.

"Egad, I think she is playing for him," cried the father.

"*Is* she playing?" said the doctor, spasmodically, as he ran to open the door. The sounds were then clear and audible. The doctor returned to his seat with firm tread, and head erect.

"She *is* playing for him," said he, in a tone of calm and assured triumph, "the prize will be his!"

The father dropped on a chair, and a change came over his face.

"Yes, he will get her! she never played for any man before, in spite of all I could say to her; and a prize she is, as you remark. By Jove, doctor, I only expected she would have got some fellow with a fee-simple estate of four or five thousand a year, and she has refused double that, and a title too; she might be Lady Sweyne now, and she is on the point of being bewitched by a curate with nothing to support him but his pipes!"

"Don't use such a contemptuous word as that, sir! what wins a world-wide fame for a man like eloquence? The powers of the orator can shake a throne, and establish a faith on a basis to which it could never otherwise attain. 'His pipes!' And I told you before, there is no use in referring to the offers she has refused. Look to the future. Besides, as I said to you, he is not depending entirely on his profession; he has some property."

"Well, one can't help grieving—but no more about it," said Mr. Warner.

"Come, shall I stop him when he is going away, and make him stay to dine?"

"On no account! let him go out genteelly, and then send him a written invitation with a day's notice. I cannot convince you that he is a most fashionable young man, although a curate."

So the invitation was sent and gladly accepted; the doctor was requested to be of the party.

Mr. Davenport, having taken a few glasses of wine, asked permission to join Miss Warner in the drawing-room. He found her reading Cowper. He declared that the "Bard of Olney," as he called him, was his favourite poet also, and he began to discuss some of his pieces. He kept down his high spirits, and spoke in a soft, subdued tone as the young lady appeared so gentle and low-spirited. She looked at him with interest and a certain degree of admiration. There he sat before her—the man of whom all the town was talking—the impassioned, the pathetic, the persuasive preacher; who, by his overwhelming eloquence, had heaped high that treasury, on the replenishment of which it depended whether betrayed innocence should be left to ruin or restored to renovated health—there he sat, as gentle and timid as a lamb, suppressing almost to a whisper that rich voice that had rolled in such musical volumes

through every recess of the sacred edifice, to chide, to admonish, to exhort. But now he seemed scarcely to dare to give an opinion on the most trifling of the poet's effusions, unless her approval sanctioned his taste. She mentioned a hymn that gave her great comfort—one of Cowper's best. She repeated two lines of it—

"The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

He exclaimed that it was the very hymn that had supported himself in "moments of anguish."

"Then you have suffered, Mr. Davenport," said she, with a look of interest.

Davenport was taken by surprise, for the fact was, he never had had a trouble or an annoyance in his life, but had hitherto passed a most joyous existence. Perhaps he recollected that it was much against his will he had gone into holy orders, and that he was only induced to do so by a liberal offer on the part of a childless uncle, touching a certain living that was for sale. He probably considered ordination "the bud," and Northwood Vicarage "the flower." At any rate he answered:—"Ah yes—I have suffered—who is exempt? but suffering is useful to the young; softens and matures the too-buoyant heart. And oh! if we do not feel the need of a balm we will not go in search of it, and will therefore lose the greatest bliss life can offer. When two young souls, that have been severally tried, happen to come together, past afflictions seem the holy cement that first unites sorrow to sorrow, and then turns the blended woe to rapture."

It depended entirely on the hearer whether this speech should produce a fit of laughter or have quite a contrary effect; in Miss Warner's case the result was serious; she burst into tears. He was electrified.

"Good heavens! have I distressed you? How can I

ever pardon myself? Can I dare to hope you will forgive me? Oh! if I thought! . . . . I cannot interpret those tears!"

If he had been guided to the right interpretation of them, the encouragement would not have been great, for the words he had just uttered, and which she thought very beautiful, brought all Campbell rushing upon her soul. And yet, though it may seem strange, the man whose language recalled so vividly the remembrance of her early love, was himself, by means of that fascinating and insinuating language, making an impression upon her heart. His were the first warm, feeling expressions she had heard since her stunning blow; it seemed such a comfort to be addressed by an ardent, religious clergyman whose peculiar province it was to console the afflicted, and who, in this case, was endowed with a voice, face, and manners, which, with a young female, added a deeper charm to his office. How different, she thought, were his delicate *empressements* from her father's rough and harassing though well-meant painstakings, forcing on her external excitements when she required internal balm! She wondered how she had dragged on her life since the loss of her dear companion, without any religious consolation. She begged leave to retire to her room for the present, as something had reminded her of a lost friend, and promised to return as soon as possible. He opened the door for her, and, looking after her until a turn in the stairs carried her out of sight, pronounced her a veritable angel.

The other pair in the dining-room sat chatting over their wine. Mr. Warner was a little desponding.

"I don't think she will ever come round. She did not say a word at dinner, and he had to ask her twice to take wine before she heard him—thinking of some one else."

The doctor feared so too, but he said—"Let her

alone; she cannot jump down his throat the first day; she is safe to take him in a little time if he ventures to ask her. The day she refuses him, I'm a fish."

"Then your fins and tail are beginning to grow," said the father moodily.

"No, sir, they are not beginning to grow," said the doctor steadily. "Supposing she is thinking of some one else, it is no matter, provided he is kept out of her presence. Women, still less than men, can live self-centred and self-satisfied. The social affections, and the love of and desire for offspring are stronger in them than in us. Denied the fulfilment of nature's impulses, they sicken and pine. Did you ever in your life see a healthy old maid?"

"Gammon and fudge! do you think I ever bothered my head about those things?"

"Probably not, and consequently you had better yield to my opinion. The need of possessing some treasure belonging to themselves alone, which they can love, foster, and protect, is apparent in girls as soon as they can speak and walk. That is the reason why female children must have dolls, while boys do not require any. Ay, and this very day, I was obliged to purchase a wax-doll for a poor deranged lady in my establishment, and she has been quieter since. Great as we may think ourselves, we are all more or less like the poor little birds. A mate she will have shortly, and one of her own choosing too. Do you just keep off any one you may not wish her to fix upon, and don't thrust this young man offensively upon her, or she will take a dislike to him."

"Let me alone for doing the first at any rate," said Mr. Warner.

That evening after tea Miss Warner and Mr. Davenport sang some hymns together while she played, and afterwards she ventured so far on profane ground as to

sing 'Those Evening Bells,' which was peculiarly adapted to her plaintive voice, and Davenport left the house thoroughly enamoured, and persuaded that if she had not a farthing in the world he should consider himself blest in obtaining her.

The next day was Saturday, and Miss Warner told her father she would be quite unable to go to church on the following day, she was so weak and nervous, she was sure she would faint again and make a second exhibition of herself—a thing she should never get over. She expressed a wish for some clergyman to come and read prayers and talk to her occasionally. Her father was not a very quick man; he offered the clergyman of the parish in which they then lodged; a very civil man, he said, who had called twice that week to inquire for her. But she did not at all approve of him, he was affected, cold, made up; there was no comfort in him.

"Then what would you say to the jockey who dined here yesterday?" said her father with a sudden start.

"Jockey!" she did not know what on earth he meant, although she coloured a little.

"Indeed, I should not have called him that," said Mr. Warner; "he would cut up into three jockeys, the great Philistine! there is a lot of flesh and bone wasted on him, he could do his little book-work at half the size. I'm in a hurry out;—would Mr. Davenport do?" She thought he was very feeling and pious.

Mr. Warner hastened to the doctor to inform him of the new turn the disorder had taken; was it a good symptom?

"Admirable! have him directly; did you ever hear of two young people praying together for an hour *tête-à-tête* who could ever bear to pray asunder again?"

So Mr. Davenport, to his great surprise and joy, was requested to attend the young lady occasionally and give

her some spiritual comfort, as she was delicate and in rather a dejected state, and her "views" were more in accordance with those of Mr. Davenport than of the parochial clergyman, whose permission the young stranger was requested to ask. This little speech was framed by the doctor, as quite necessary to carry off a rather singular proceeding. Davenport required very little apology, whatever might have been the feelings of the rejected minister;—he was devoted in his attentions. And will any one wonder if Davenport, with the attractions of his person and the insinuating influence derived from his profession, obtained access to that lonely and wounded heart, deprived of a mother and never experiencing a father's tenderness, though encumbered by his injudicious assiduities? Campbell seemed little more than a phantom of perfection that had illuminated her childhood and early girlhood with a brightness that did not belong to this world, and that vanished almost naturally when the summer day's dream was changed for the calm and sober stage of womanhood. It was four years since she had seen him, and since that time not a token that he existed had reached her.

Her spirit was still depressed, while the cause of its depression was vanishing fast into the distance. Her mental disease had become a state of chronic relaxation in which active, exciting remedies might be sure of success. With a cherished thought,—with a tender but indistinct recollection, the empire of her soul was to be disputed by a visible representative of manly beauty and noble bearing; with the moral side of poetical religion and fervent overflowing love. Certain it is, however, that their characters and dispositions did not dove-tail into one another.

Much as Mr. Davenport endeavoured to press down the elasticity of his spirits to meet her quiet, pensive

manners, there was a dashing and daring vivacity about him and everything that he said, which he could not subdue, and which was quite uncongenial to her contemplative and thoughtful mind. And yet his seriousness was so theatrical,—there was something so artificial in his manner when he attempted to enter into the mysteries of sorrow, or to deal with the grand ends of man's existence, that she was fain to wish again that he would tear off the mask, and laugh and look once more like the gods of Olympus. Not but that he could preach and read prayers with a solemnity that had not the least appearance of being artistical or put on, and for the time he did feel really serious; but in the vivid, trying, hand-to-hand intercourse of social converse, it is far less easy to keep up for long in that which goes against one's nature. So on the whole he pleased her best when he was reading prayers for her. She could not say to him as she might to Campbell in the words of Julie: "Nos âmes se sont touchées par tous les points, et nous avons partout senti la même cohérence." But she might say to her own chastened heart in the beautiful words of the poetess:—

"Oh, ask not, hope thou not too much
Of sympathy below!
Few are the hearts whence one same touch
Bids the sweet fountain flow;
Few—and by still conflicting powers
Forbidden here to meet;
Such ties would make this life of ours
Too fair for aught so fleet.

That the man who seemed made for her, and capable of satisfying all the yearnings of her heart was turned into an unrepresented notion, was the grave error of her father, who wrenched her from him without investigating the state of her feelings, without asking a single question even, or condescending to deliberate whether the com-

panion round whom her young affections were clinging had a mind suited to the peculiar character of hers, and whether family pride might not indeed be sacrificed to individual happiness. The great mistake of her life rested at Mr. Warner's door; if she preferred to a vacuum an atmosphere imperfectly adapted to the requirements of healthy and free respiration, she was not to be blamed.

Man flatters himself that he can occasionally improve upon nature, and he may direct the ear to the ravishing notes of the mule-bird, and point proudly to the accumulated mass of petals that swell the double rose into a luxurious pile of beauty,—but the most unfortunate attempt he makes is when he seizes on a group of her rational, sentient creatures, tears asunder those who have instinctively moved towards one another, pairs them anew with his own sacrilegious hand, and thus sends them down the path of life indissolubly linked together.

Six weeks passed in this manner; the autumn was advanced, and the time had arrived for Mr. Davenport to return to his curacy. The day before his departure he went to take leave of Miss Warner, resolving that if the slightest opportunity offered he would risk all and ask "the question." He drew from his pocket a book that she had lent him, and placed it in her hands.

"You could not have read it in so short a time, but perhaps you do not like it," said she.

"It is beautiful," he answered, "but I have not time to finish it; I must return to my curacy to-morrow."

She coloured. "I—we shall be very dull when you are gone."

"If you will permit me, I will speak to the incumbent of this parish to attend you in my place."

"No, thank you; papa is acquainted with him, and could ask him, but—I do not wish to have him."

"I hope my ministration has been comfortable—profitable to you;——" said he.

"Yes, very much so; but now——"

"You were speaking——?"

"I am only saying that—I do not feel equal to going to church yet, and I do not wish to have a stranger attending me, to whom I am not accustomed, therefore——"

He gazed at her for the completion of the sentence. She could not bear that piercing blue eye fixed on her, and she tried to avert it by finishing her words.

"Therefore it is unfortunate you cannot remain a little longer."

"My rector requires my immediate re-appearance,—but oh! I might minister to you until the end of my life, if you would only say 'yes.' What do you say, dear Miss Warner? I do not kneel to you as you may have seen your other suppliants do, for I kneel to God alone; but here I stand before you assuring you that the future bliss or misery of my life depends solely on you."

He spoke with perfect earnestness, and as he stood with his towering figure erect before her, his splendid face wore for the moment an expression of deep feeling.

And she!—her brain reeled and her heart beat to suffocation; perhaps she did not know what she said, but he was convinced he heard a faint "yes," and the glowing, happy, young clergyman printed his first kiss on the same soft cheek where the mild, the intellectual, the deep-hearted medical student had buried his last.

* * * * * * * *

Mr. Warner was sitting alone in his parlour. A loud, irregular kind of knock was heard at the door.

"Come in!" Mr. Davenport entered, flushed and

agitated but with a very respectful manner. After a few words of course, he said:—

"Sir, I do not know whether you have noticed my devotion to your daughter or not, but—I have laid my heart at her feet, and——"

"And what, sir?" cried the father.

"She has deigned to accept me," said Davenport in a low voice.

"Are you sure, sir?" repeated Mr. Warner, catching hold of the chimneypiece.

"I am, sir," answered the trembling lover.

Mr. Warner threw himself into a chair, unable to speak under his conflicting emotions. She was saved from the "villain" Campbell—she would not go mad; —but her doom was sealed—a curate's wife!

Mr. Davenport continued standing before him like a culprit; he was expecting a refusal, the man's manner was so strange.

"I know I have been very aspiring, sir; my fortune is small indeed, compared with yours; but I will make her happy, if a life spent in the endeavour can do so."

"Keep up your spirits," said Mr. Warner, "but I must consult my friends; I will write you a note."

Mr. Davenport withdrew. Of course, the "friends" were only the doctor, in search of whom two messengers were sent; one to his house, the other to the reading-room. He arrived in haste.

"The question is popped," cried Mr. Warner.

"And your daughter?" gasped the doctor.

"Has taken him."

"Heaven be praised!"

"What do you mean, sir?" said the father, angrily; "I can tell you, I don't praise Heaven for giving her to one of its curates; let him be thankful himself that

he is taken such good care of; to me it is a necessary evil."

"It is a blessing,—a blessing, I say," cried the doctor, energetically; "he has beaten them all! Oh, there is nothing like those clergymen—nothing. They have a *που στω* that no one else has, and on that they stand, and from that they work and triumph!"

Mr. Warner looked at him with astonishment and displeasure.

"What do you mean, sir, by a 'cow's toe,' and by saying clergymen work with the help of it? I have heard of people using a cat's paw, of course; but a 'cow's toe!' I suspect you are insane, or indulging in some slang that never fell under my notice before. And, to do the man justice, he is acting honestly for himself, and not resorting to any tools,—neither paws, nor toes, nor hoofs; except, indeed, Old Harry himself helped him to bewitch that girl."

Here the doctor fell into such an immoderate fit of laughing, that Mr. Warner's suspicions were confirmed, and he settled that he was stark mad. His hand was on the bell, probably to summon assistance and get him carried off to his own asylum; but the doctor composed himself, and explained that he had been merely quoting two Greek words, in reference to a most hackneyed story, which he supposed Mr. Warner knew.

Mr. Warner, enraged, not so much at having been detected in ignorance, as at having been placed in a ridiculous position by his mistake, and then laughed at by one whom he deemed immeasurably his inferior, roared out:—

"And how dare you quote Greek to a gentleman, sir? What do I want with Greek? It does very well for people who have to earn their bread, to stupefy themselves with such pursuits, but I never had any need of grammars,

or saws, or ledgers, or awls, or trowels; I had a few acres. You had better mind your business, and go up and see how the girl is after this exploit. The man is not with her now."

The doctor, nettled and affronted at seeing the learned professions scornfully bundled up in one faggot with all sorts of mean trades, and then trampled under foot by the "extensive landed proprietor," said, in a disgusted tone:—

"What 'exploit' has been performed? and whom do you mean by 'the man'?"

"You must be the most thick-skulled fellow on earth, if you don't know whom I mean," cried Mr. Warner; "but you do know right well that I refer to that parson Davenport."

"And can't you call him Mr. Davenport, and not 'the man?' Really, it is quite indelicate to call him 'the man' on this occasion. Besides, he is no parson; a parson is a beneficed clergyman."

"Plague on them! I call the whole tribe parsons," said Mr. Warner.

"Mr. Davenport is not a beneficed clergyman," persisted the doctor, maliciously.

"Hang you, I think I know that with a witness! know it to my cost!" cried the exasperated sire, as he ran off to write to Mr. Davenport. He thought it prudent, however, to go up-stairs first and question his daughter. He burst into the drawing-room, leaving the door open after him.

"Amelia, did you tell that——, I mean Mr. Davenport, that you would marry him?"

"Oh, papa!"

"Make haste, I can't wait."

"I don't know, papa."

"You don't know! and when will you know! All I

can say is, that if you have refused him, he has told me the most confounded lie——"

"O goodness!—I did not refuse him."

"And did you agree to be spliced to him or not?"

"Heavens, what language!" said a placid, urbane voice at the door.

This was the doctor, who, coming up-stairs, according to Mr. Warner's request, overheard the last words as he entered the room.

"Come down, sir; you have had every satisfaction." He led him off.

At the top of the stairs he whispered: "You had better show me the note when it is written."

"Very good," answered the other, who, with all his insolence and pride, was unconsciously under the influence of the superior intellect. The doctor then returned to the drawing-room, and chatted kindly for a little while to poor Amelia, and then went down-stairs and met Mr. Warner in the hall with the note in his hand.

"What kept you? read it quick." The doctor read.

"DEAR SIR,—MY daughter seems willing. You had better come this evening (since you are leaving Cheltenham to-morrow), and let the tug about ways and means begin at once.—Yours, truly, J. W.

"Is it possible you were going to send such a note as this to a refined, feeling, highly-educated gentleman? What would he have thought of you? It is a mercy I am here."

"Well, then, write him a note yourself, and let me see it; and, if I like it, I'll sign it."

"Yes: and you'll please sign your name in full, and not 'J. W.' How is he to know who 'J. W.' is?"

"Right sorry he'd be not to know who 'J. W.' is! A lucky pounce for him to have pounced on 'J. W.'!

Catch him letting him out of his claws!" roared Mr. Warner.

A note was constructed by the doctor, in which the words, "beloved child," "future son-in-law," "necessary preliminaries," and "certain prospects of happiness," were the most conspicuous.

The happy Davenport arrived in the evening, and laid his possessions and prospects before Mr. Warner. His father had left him three hundred pounds a-year; his uncle had purchased for him the next presentation to the vicarage of Northwood, value about four hundred pounds a-year; the old vicar was still living, but of a most encouraging age—seventy-eight; his health in a most satisfactory state—had had two paralytic strokes; meantime he held the curacy of Malvern. He had nothing more to offer. Mr. Warner was resigned. He secured to his daughter thirty thousand pounds, with a tolerably good grace. Davenport was to return to his curacy until he could procure a deputy, and Mr. Warner was to have the legal matters put into the hands of his solicitor.

When the lover was gone, Mr. Warner gave vent to his feelings; he threw himself back in the chair and actually groaned. "Seven hundred a-year! the utmost point to which he can strain his income; and Sir Francis Sweyne's hounds cost him a thousand a year! Oh, what that girl has thrown away, and what she has taken!"

"What has she thrown away?" said the doctor indignantly; "a pack of hounds that stood their keeper at a thousand a year! A most tantalizing picture of happiness! to say nothing of having herself lost the chance of being the grandest of the hounds in the most sumptuous kennel!"

The next morning Davenport called just before his departure, and took a tender, but most respectful leave

of Miss Warner, and placed on her finger a beautiful ring, composed of pearls and turquoises, a pledge of their betrothal.

The settlements were proceeded with rapidly, and the father felt relieved when things were so far advanced that there could be no receding.

"It is a great ease," said he to the doctor, "to be rid of all fear of Bedlam and Bolus."

"Bedlam!" cried the horrified doctor, "I am amazed to hear you apply such a coarse, obsolete word, to a retreat for agitated nerves; where petting, kindness, and forbearance are resorted to as the conclusive sources of success. And Bolus! If you insinuate that she will have a happy escape from my medicines, you do me the greatest injustice; I have never given her anything but a mild tonic, and——"

"Bah! hold your tongue, man, I was not thinking of you; I was alluding to a sneak that you never saw, and my mentioning him to you was a slip of the tongue. I hardly know what I am saying, with this girl and her frantic eccentricities on my hands. But she is certainly much better since she fixed her mind on this business; the house has been full of those cattle all the day, and she has been perpetually running up and down stairs; formerly she lay on the sofa eight hours without stirring; I often thought I'd have to take out my penknife and cut through the roots that seemed to have grown from her head and her heels into the upholstery."

"But what cattle is she filling the house with?" asked the doctor, much puzzled.

"Why, mantuamakers and milliners, and workwomen of every kind; I can hardly get across the hall without tumbling over them."

"Oh, all right! all right!" cried the doctor; "the little bird is beginning to build her nest:—didn't I tell you so?"

Mr. Davenport, having procured a gentleman to do his duty for a certain period, came flying back to Cheltenham on the wings of love. Then followed a season of rapture; he was never out of her presence; he kept her in a state of mental inebriation; he did not leave her a moment to think; all his fascinations were in full force; singing hymns together, reading together, walking and riding on horseback together; making love in every imaginable way—what slow heart could ask how they got through the day?

The wedding morning was fast approaching; she would not hear of any company; there was to be no déjeuner, no bridesmaids, no entertainment of any kind. She told the doctor her health would not be equal to anything beyond what was strictly private; so he arranged everything according to her wishes, to the great satisfaction of her father, who vowed he was not up to courtly pomp and ceremony.

Mr. Davenport wondered; he knew nothing of the tumult that was going on within her breast. He was just the man to be the hero of a bridal feast—that strange mixture of religion, poetry, gaiety, and tears. He enjoyed display, processions, fashionable réunions, and feastings immensely, especially those of an exciting and interesting character; he wished for a magnificent banquet, and saloons decked for the occasion with every resource of art, and crowded with a brilliant array of guests; he desired that all the élite of Cheltenham should behold the prize he was getting, and with what a princely grace it was bestowed; and well would he have borne himself in the throng, and amidst the great and the noble have still looked the noblest of all. He was a man who, place him in whatever position you might, yet seemed made to adorn an eminence still higher.

But he was obliged to yield to the bride's unaccountable

fancy. Miss Warner sent an invitation to the lady who had been her governess, and for whom she had a great regard; she alone was to accompany her to the altar.

The morning arrived; she walked up the aisle between her father and her governess. She was magnificently dressed, but no aërial train of youthful bridesmaids in their gossamer drapery swept along in her wake to soften off her glory; she stood resplendent and alone; how she felt none could tell, her face was as pale as death. The doctor followed close after her with his pocket filled with cordials, as he feared from her appearance at breakfast that she would give way at the very commencement of the ceremony. Then came Davenport with an expression of chastened joy on his face, attended on his right by a most intimate friend whom he had requested permission to bring with him as his bridesman. These six formed the entire group.

When they reached the appointed spot the bridegroom stepped forward and took his place by her side. The officiating clergyman glanced at them, and thought that in all his experience he had never beheld so perfect a pair. Davenport looked down on her from his height of six feet one, with an expression of face in which protection and worship were beautifully mingled. Perhaps as they stood together there, in that most important moment of their lives, when on the eve of uttering the awful vow, she might have lifted her eye timidly to his, and the look he then wore might have re-assured her. Certain it is that she went through that marvellous rite without faltering and without changing from the previous marble expression of her face; she required no stimulants. It was all over. Her father alone kissed her; there was that about her by which not only the spectators, but even the bridegroom himself seemed spell-bound. No congratulations were offered, few words spoken; she walked out of church with

a firm step, leaning on the arm of her husband, and the little party returned home. She changed her dress, and was almost lifted into the carriage by her weeping father.

"God bless you!" said the doctor, wringing her hand. Davenport sprang in after her, and the carriage dashed off on the road to Derbyshire where they were to take a tour previous to establishing themselves at Malvern. Mr. Davenport had wished to pass the period coarsely and unfeelingly termed the honeymoon, amidst the wild woods and bowers of Warner Park, but on his proposing it to Amelia she had fallen into such a bitter flood of weeping that the astonished lover never touched on the subject again.

Mr. Warner gave the doctor a very handsome fee, and Amelia, to whom he had been indefatigable in his attentions and kind offices during her preparations for marriage, presented him with a chaste and valuable tea-service of silver purchased out of the ample funds which her father had placed at her disposal for procuring her wedding outfit. So the worthy physician was more than satisfied.

But there was another member of God's family on earth to whom this happy consummation was not quite so agreeable.

CHAPTER XXV.

A THUNDERBOLT.

"Weg ist alles was du liebtest,
Weg warum du dich betrübtest,
Weg dein Fleiss und deine Ruh."
GOETHE.

"Tu non inventa reperta
Luctus eras levior."
OVID.

MR. WARNER, immediately after having consigned his treasure to the arms of her new protector, set out on his return home. Before his departure, he sent a notice of the marriage to the London papers. On many a table, in many a reading-room, were those papers thrown, and many an eye ran lightly over that announcement, which brought no definite idea to the mind of the general reader beyond the fact that it formed an assemblage of names. But there was one person in the city of London on whom the impression was different. In a quiet reading-room, in a quiet part of the town, sat three gentlemen, engaged with the morning papers. It was a dull, dark place enough, not like the brilliant saloons that are now thrown open to the public, and there was no noise in the house, and very little in the street. One of the three gentlemen looking over the news was Dr. Campbell. Yes: he was now a doctor; he had passed all his examinations creditably;

he was a surgeon and a physician both. He was twenty-four years of age, and had lately returned from a tour in Holland, Germany, and France, and was in short fully accomplished, and ready to begin to practise, but was quite unsettled as to his plans. He seldom read deaths and marriages, but now, as his eye wandered down the column, it caught the name of Amelia, and the next instant he was in possession of the whole.

Then that quiet room rang with a cry such as, we may safely aver, ignorant though we be of the history of any of its successive inhabitants, its walls never echoed before. "Oh, that thou wouldest rend the heavens!" sighs the great Hebrew poet:—this cry seemed capable of accomplishing the wish. In a second after it was heard he who uttered it fell forward on the table apparently dead. The younger of the two other gentlemen rushed to him. The elder, who appeared not far from fifty, fell back in his chair, that cry had actually smitten him down like a hailstorm; he lay rigid, and of a dingy lemon-colour, looking like a corpse just exhumed. One of the waiters, attracted by the terrible sound, darted into the room.

"Hasten, get some water,—this gentleman—" cried the only one of the party that could speak,—but that faculty seemed to be failing him too, for he could proceed no farther.

"This gentleman! and that gentleman!" exclaimed the terrified servant, as he gazed first on Campbell and next on the elder person. He then flew down-stairs. "Here! here! Martin! Ellen! Mrs. Toms! there are two gentlemen dead in the reading-room; will no one come up-stairs?"

Mrs. Toms, the wife of the proprietor of the house hurried out of her parlour:—

"What stuff are you talking Philip? there are only three gentlemen above to my knowledge, and how can you attempt to say that two have dropped dead?"

Mrs. Toms seemed to have dabbled a little in statistics and the doctrine of chances; she felt that if there had been twenty gentlemen above the chances against two of them dropping dead would have been greatly diminished. Such a cool person in a catastrophe was invaluable.

"I don't care whether there are many or few there," answered Philip; "there are two dead, and if they did not die naturally the third murdered them, and that is worse. Goodness mercy! what will become of us? Of course they have been murdered, and that was what made them roar so dreadful. I must call in the police directly."

"How!" cried Mrs. Toms, who was a little bothered rather than deaf,—"was that yell I heard in this house?"

"La, to be sure it was, ma'am; it was it made me run into the room."

Mrs. Toms was doubting whether she would scream, or pray, or fly into the street and cry "murder!" when Martin, an older, steadier servant than Philip, arrived. Having learned the cause of the confusion, he begged of Mrs. Toms to go back to her parlour until he had ascertained the real state of affairs.

"La, Martin, you'll be dispatched in no time if you go up," cried Philip after him, as he mounted the stairs. Martin found the elder gentleman, who by his dress was evidently a clergyman, recovered, but still pale, and both he and the other were raising up Campbell, who showed no signs of life.

"Why will you not hasten with some water?" they both said at the same time.

Mrs. Toms, on hearing the real version of the business, with all a woman's charity flew to the spot, bringing salts and brandy-and-water, but nothing had the least effect on the patient."

"We are only losing time," said the clergyman, "he must have medical aid." They fortunately found a card

in his pocket with his address on it. A carriage was called, and Campbell was lifted into it by the waiters with the help of the gentlemen. While the young man was arranging him as comfortably as he could, the clergyman surveyed with deep interest those features on which Death seemed resting without his terrors.

"What a face that is!" exclaimed he. "And must he pass so early? but no! he will recover; that forehead owes something to the world;—some discovery, some invention, or some new thoughts. God did not thus build it for nothing."

Oh, ye human prophets! Oh, the depths of the mysteries of Fate! Had that young spirit then departed there would not have been one treasure the less on that account in the stores of science or of literature; but one sin the less would have darkened the annals of the Recording Angel, and far different would have been the lot of the good man now bending over him.

"What could have affected him so terribly?" said the young man.

"That does not concern us," answered the clergyman; "take him to his lodgings quickly, and procure a physician; I have an unavoidable engagement or I would accompany you, but I will call to see him this evening; hand me his card, for he is an utter stranger to me."

The other did so, and they separated: that clergyman was Mr. Purdon.

Campbell did not recover his senses until the evening; he was surrounded by medical friends, and his father was summoned immediately. A typhus fever succeeded the fainting fit, and he was delirious for a fortnight.

Mr. Purdon, who had come to town on business for a few weeks, and had met him by chance in the reading-room on that sad morning, took a deep interest in him, and called frequently during his illness. He thus became

acquainted with the elder Campbell, who found him his greatest support during his trying attendance on his son. When Robert recovered his reason, Mr. Purdon prayed constantly by his bed-side, and, whether his words were understood or not, the heavenly tones of his voice seemed to bring a sort of calm to the sufferer.

At last Robert Campbell recovered,—as much as ever he was to recover,—for he was never the same again. There was a languor about him,—a want of interest in everything, and in any kind of pursuit, which he could not shake off, but which, some thought, added to the charm of his manner. The light of his eye was somewhat quenched, but many pronounced it the more bewitching on that account. He had one advantage at least; his conscience was clear. He had not the aggravating burden of self-reproach to weigh on his reviving forces, and whisper "no!" to every struggle that pride and reason might make to carry him on like a man over the shipwreck of his hopes and his anticipations. He had obeyed his father to the letter; he had never revisited his home since that gloomy night when sire and son went off in the mail to London. He had never sought to communicate with Miss Warner by letter or message, and now Mr. Warner's plans with regard to his daughter were brought to a successful issue, without any interference on his part to mar or hinder their legitimate course. His heart was broken, to be sure, but he had behaved rightly; he was at peace with himself. Although he had placed the most perfect confidence in Amelia's fidelity, he did not blame her in the slightest degree; he took a perfectly just view of her case. His passions never perverted his clear fine intellect; although his feelings were intensely strong, he was not headlong nor impulsive, so his heart and his judgment were generally at harmony together. Even when he told Amelia in the garden that she belonged to him, and not

to her father, this outbreak was not the effects of angry passion, but proceeded from a conviction, however erroneous it might be, that had for some time taken possession of his mind.

Mr. Purdon, to whom his father had hinted the cause of his malady, was extremely anxious to be of use to him; he asked him to come and set up at Northwood, as there was a good opening there, the principal physician having lately removed to a larger town. But he refused; he could not at present apply his mind to so important and responsible a profession. Mr. Purdon next advised his father to send him to travel; Campbell senior said that was his own desire too, particularly as his son had let fall that if he could enjoy anything, it would be a visit to the remains of ancient Greece; but he was not long returned from the Continent, and there was no means of providing for another excursion but by infringing on a few hundreds that he had in the funds. The following day the Campbells received an anonymous letter containing two bank-notes of one hundred pounds each. They could not doubt who their generous benefactor was. Mr. Purdon called in a day or two, to take leave of them previous to his return home. The father made an attempt to thank him; Mr. Purdon asked to see the letter, and it was shown to him.

"There is no name to this letter, sir; you cannot connect me with it," said he, rather stiffly. Nothing remained but to enjoy the boon in silence.

Our unhappy hero took his departure as soon as his strength would permit; when the shores of England faded to his view perhaps he applied to himself the second stanza of the third canto of 'Childe Harold,' but we will quote, in reference to him, three lines from another poet.

"Greece was the land he chose; a mind decay'd
And ruin'd there 'midst glorious ruins stray'd;
There read and walked and mused; there loved, and wept and pray'd."

The inspiring scenes through which he passed, and the high thoughts they called up, no doubt lessened for a time the weight of past memories; but certainly sympathy with fallen grandeur and prostrate art and ivy-muffled portico did not afford that remedy for his private miseries with which it seems to have supplied a noble bard; it was no possible consolation to him for the loss of his earthly idol that the temple of Athene at Sunium had only nine Doric columns remaining, or that her statue in bronze no longer towered on the summit of the Acropolis.

"What are our woes and sufferings? come and see
The ivy; hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er heaps of stones and broken columns, ye
Whose agonies are evils of a day,
A world is at your feet as fragile as your clay."

The difference between the man and the fragile world at his feet is, that it is a senseless block or clod, and he is a living being, susceptible of every kind of bodily and mental torture. One human heart quivering and bleeding is a more serious affair in our estimation than if all the engines of war were telling with unerring fidelity on all the Propylæa which despot after despot added to the marvellous temple of Hephæstus, in far back times, when this our opinion was so little the opinion of "those in power," that a hundred men might then be valued at one column, and a hundred and twenty thousand human beings were expended on digging an unfinished canal from Bubastis to the Arabian Gulf. The groans and sufferings of the hundred and twenty thousand men go for nothing of course, when we survey the deplorable sight of the choked-up and nearly obliterated bed of the canal.

Meantime the month spent by Robert Campbell in delirium and burning fever was passed by Davenport,

and by Amelia too, we must confess, in spite of occasional visions and memories, in a state of intoxicating happiness. Then they returned to Malvern, and visits and congratulations poured in on them, and parties were made for them, but Mrs. Davenport could not go out anywhere, she felt so unwell, so languid; nothing pleased her. Davenport answered the inquiries of his friends with a mysterious, puzzled air.

Amelia desired that her friend, "the doctor," should be sent for to Cheltenham. He came in haste and pronounced her to be "in a most delightful situation," gave her some rules respecting the management of her health, spoke a few words in private to her husband, and returned home ten pounds the richer, besides his expenses paid. Then Davenport's attentions were unremitting; he was never away from her except when engaged in his duties; he was her nurse, her companion, her worshipper.

One Sunday in the pleasant month of August he returned home very late from morning service; he had been delayed by baptisms and other matters; he met in the lobby a nice matron, dressed with the greatest neatness, coming to meet him with something in her arms, enveloped in clouds of new flannel. The clouds were pushed aside, and he was shown a beautiful little miniature of himself. Transported with joy he flew to his Amelia and found her in bed in a curtained room fragrant with eau de Cologne, quiet and happy, surrounded by her women. There was no bustle, nor confusion, nor disorder; the little visitor might have been handed down from heaven by an angel, for all the trouble it seemed to have given. The father, having embraced the young mother, ordered the babe to be laid on her bosom again, stood for a few minutes with his eyes riveted on them, and then went down to his dinner a happy man.

On that same day Dr. Campbell was standing in the

recess of the Bay of Eleusis, gazing across its deep waters upon the island of Salamis, which lay exactly opposite to him. No one loved him, and he had nothing left to love, but there he stood with the recollections of the great battle rushing through his mind; the everlasting chants of the Attic poets, with which the very air seemed laden, ringing in his ears; the sun of Attica shining over his head, and his eye gladdened with the dancing waters, gay and fresh as when they heaved under the triremes of Themistocles, and laughed at the Asiatic despot as he fled "in one ship," over "bloody waves," clogged with the corpses of his mightiest and his best. Which would you rather have been, Davenport or Campbell, on that day? Reader, judge for yourself; we have made our choice, but will not influence you by telling it.

The arrival of the little stranger brought to Amelia's breast the full tranquillity which she had not enjoyed before. The beckoning phantom that had been ever flitting on the verge of the horizon, at last sank beneath it. True, it was becoming more indistinct every day; its outline was gradually melting into the surrounding clouds, but she felt that the more she hid her face from it, and buried her eyes in the breast of the generous Davenport, and felt his faithful arms clasping her round like a tower of strength, the more threatening was its aspect, and the more it seemed to wave its shadowy arm. But the infant had laid it:

"Baby fingers, waxen touches, pressed him from the mother's breast."

After travelling for a year Dr. Campbell returned to England. He thankfully accepted from Greece all that she was able to give: his mind was stored with subjects for thought on which it might feed for many a year afterwards; but a new heart and a vigorous spirit on which to begin life strenuously were among the gifts that Greece herself was unable to bestow.

He arrived just in time to see his father die. Duncan Campbell never recovered the shock he had received from the violent illness of his son, and his own harassing attendance on him. Robert inherited his little savings, a few hundred pounds;—that was his all. When his father was buried he wrote to Mr. Purdon, according to the request of that gentleman, informing him of his return, and of his recent loss. Mr. Purdon immediately wrote to offer him a dispensary in Northwood which had been just established, and to which his interest could get him appointed. Campbell knew that he must either follow his profession or starve, and thinking this as good a commencement as any other, gratefully embraced Mr. Purdon's offer and established himself at Cypress Cottage. He was often at Mr. Purdon's house; his society was a great acquisition to the rector of Ashcombe, who was then quite alone, his daughter being at school in France.

When Mrs. Davenport was two years married, her second boy being then three months old, her husband brought her to London for medical advice. She had been looking a little pale and thin, and in spite of her assurances to the contrary he settled she was very ill,—perhaps falling into a consumption,—so he got a wet-nurse for the baby, and carried his wife off to town, to her great annoyance. The physician gave a very favourable opinion, said she had been only thinned by nursing, and that she would soon be strong again.

So they settled to return home when the week for which they took their lodgings had expired. A day or two before their departure they were walking along the Strand when a gentleman passed very close to them.

"That man eyed you pretty sharply, my darling," said Davenport; "he does not often meet such a face in the street." He looked proudly at her, but started imme-

diately: "My heart and soul, how pale you are! Dear, dear, I walk you too much,"

"Oh, 'tis nothing; I am only a little tired."

"Yes, yes, I never consider how delicate you are; you must come in here and rest yourself, and I will get a cab." He led her back to a chemist's shop which they had just passed, and at the door of which several persons were standing.

"What is the matter?" said Davenport; "let us go in."

"A gentleman that was near falling in the street, sir," said a rough-looking man. "I suppose he got a megrim in his head; "it was I caught him; he is inside now."

"Oh Arthur! come away," cried Mrs. Davenport.

"Come away, indeed!" repeated he, seeing her looking worse than ever. "Will you let us in?" he cried, thundering at the door which the shopman had shut upon the curious crowd.

The man unfastened it, pulled in the Davenports, and slapped it again on the idlers. Campbell was in the back parlour.

Mrs. Davenport threw herself on a chair in the shop and said:—

"I am quite well now."

The chemist looked as if he thought otherwise, and requested of her to take something he filled out for her. She drank it and began to recover her colour. Davenport cast one of his keen glances into the parlour, the door of which was open, and then whispered to his wife:

"The gentleman in there, love, is the same who was eyeing you in the street."

She, scarcely conscious of what she was saying, answered:—

"I think I knew him once."

At the same moment Campbell, not knowing who was in the shop, came out of the parlour, being now recovered. Davenport, in his usual kind and affable manner, hoped he was better, informed him his wife had the pleasure of knowing him, and before either of them could think or speak placed them in front of one another. And thus they met. The preparation they had both gone through had broken the shock, and they shook hands quietly, but without lifting up their eyes or speaking. But Davenport could talk for both.

"And pray where did you know my wife, sir?"

"I lived in her neighbourhood when I was a boy," answered the miserable Campbell, who was all but literally on a gridiron.

"My love, you must introduce me to your friend, and tell me his name," said Davenport to his wife.

She took no notice of his words either by word or gesture, which would have made another look awkward, but he was equal to everything; he would have made a capital fellow to take a fictitious wife for the sportula, as far as tact and resources went, but he was veracity itself.

"She is somewhat overcome by a long walk, and cannot stand up yet; we will leave her to herself for the present."

Campbell who had been stabbed by hearing his Milly called "my wife," and "my love" by another man, was almost as stupefied as she was, but he made a violent effort and said:—

"If you please I will introduce myself; my name is Campbell; I lived formerly in the small town of —— in Sussex, but I left it a long time ago; I am now a physician practising at Northwood."

"Ha!" exclaimed Davenport, "that is to be my home some day; if I survive the present incumbent I am to succeed him."

"I hope you will live many years longer than that old gentleman, sir," answered Campbell; "his race is nearly run, I was called in lately and have no hopes of him."

"It is all in the hands of Providence," said Davenport, a little agitated. "I must go for a cab to take Mrs. Davenport home: we may be near neighbours in the country, sir, and I hope you will call at our lodgings before we leave town," and having presented Campbell with his card he ran off to procure a conveyance.

Campbell approached Mrs. Davenport:—

"I must speak to you to-morrow for a few minutes alone; name the hour."

"Half-past eight in the morning," said she.

He then left the shop. Shortly after the Davenports returned home in a cab.

Mr. Davenport went to morning prayers daily during his stay in town. It was the only time in which the husband and wife were separated. She was not strong enough to rise and accompany him, and sometimes she was not up when he returned. But this morning she was dressed and in the drawing-room by half-past eight, and she was but two minutes there when Campbell arrived. He advanced a few steps into the room, then stopped and gazed intently on her. She fixed her eyes on him with equal earnestness, and thus they seemed to read each other's souls, and dwell on each other's features for some minutes, with wild wonder that they had been so long parted, and that they had thus met at last. Neither seemed to be for an instant conscious that the other could experience any embarrassment from that steady gaze: their own feelings absorbed each so completely that they forgot as much that the being opposite was capable of emotion as if an Antinous or a Madonna had been the object of those intense regards. They were both so changed;—and yet under all—under the improved

beauty, and the more matured outline of feature, and the more thoughtful expression of countenance, each had the same look as ever,—the same dear familiar face.

For one moment Amelia's impulse was to rush to him, live or die in his arms, and be—whatever he wished to make her:—even as she had done on that memorable morning when they pledged their faith to one another, and when to act thus was no sin. But things were not now as they had been then. She rallied. She rallied to the two little treasures whom she had left at home, and whom she loved better than her life; she rallied to the amiable, single-minded man who was now on his knees before the only Being who held a higher place in his heart than she did; the man in whose bosom she had nestled for the last two years, and there found calm and comfort after the very chill of death had passed over her.

She offered Campbell her hand, without speaking, and he led her to the sofa. They sat down. She thought it time to withdraw the hand, but he detained it.

"Leave it to me for awhile, Milly, it is all I ask for years of suffering."

These were the first words that were spoken. He held it in a tighter grasp. He continued:—

"Do not think that I am come here this morning to upbraid you for what you have done. You had many reasons for not remaining faithful to a vague hope when not a word came from me, to offer the least hint, to suggest the remotest plan by which we could ever meet again in this world. But what could I do? ask you to fly with me to beggary and misery? I dared not do it. I knew, too, that you were wretched in your father's house—how could it be otherwise? no tenderness, no sympathy. My heart wept blood for you when I thought of your desolate situation. I made every allowance for

your deed. Yet I had a strange confidence that heaven was preserving you for me, and it sometimes occurred to me that any base overture of mine might interfere with the eternal design, and doom me to destruction as the punishment of my impious meddling. But those were poetical flights, Milly," he added, with a mournful smile.

She remained silent—what could she say? Her head drooped, and her rich hair, falling in masses about her face, partly concealed her anguish and her confusion. He went on :—

"Now you are probably anxious to know my object in calling here. I should not have presumed to ask for an interview without good reason. You will soon be going to reside at Northwood, for the present vicar has not many weeks to live. My presence in the neighbourhood might be painful to you, and I now offer to quit that country directly and look for practice in some distant shire, if you say that my doing so would conduce to your tranquillity."

"Not on my account," she faltered.

"Milly, you must speak more decidedly than that. Will any unpleasant recollections, connected with me, render you less happy in performing your duties to your husband and children? for I suppose you have a child—or two."

He paused, and his lip quivered. He shot his tutored eye over her figure, but it told no tales; it still looked almost girlish. She remained perfectly mute.

"Milly, I will leave that country the instant you desire me, but you *must* speak the word."

Was he wishing to be bid stay? Should he not have gone without consulting her, if he had studied what was for the real happiness of each? But there was a weak point in his character; I have acknowledged it before. At last she spoke :—

"Robert, I have made a vow to another man; whether rash or not, it is now too late to canvass. But he deserves all the love I can give him, and he shall have all the fealty that I owe him. I would not injure your prospects of flourishing in a place where you are beginning to be known, and must, of course, be esteemed. I have injured you enough already. My husband will no doubt ask you to his house; cannot we meet as friends? but—we must love one another no more—you feel that—no more!"

"I know it, Milly! we must love no more!". . . .

So they thought, and so they promised then—yes! Robert Campbell and Amelia Warner promised *not* to love one another any more for ever; and the streams that were rushing down from the hills did not bend back the curl of their crests and ripple upwards to their source on the summit, but the clouds broke away and the sun continued to ascend until he laughed in at the window near which those two were sitting, with their still adoring hearts throbbing *backwards*, from one another, at their own imperious command.

Campbell rose. "I am going back to Northwood to-morrow; I came here with a patient whom I promised not to lose sight of until I delivered him into the hands of a London physician. Farewell!" He lingered. "I suppose you have heard of my father's death."

"Yes! what did he die of?"

"He got a rheumatic fever, brought on by cold and fatigue, suffered in attending me during a frightful illness that I had just two years ago; he recovered the fever, but he was never the same again; he died of a severe attack of paralysis."

Well she guessed what caused the "frightful illness" he had "two years ago."

"Were you away when he died?"

"No, I arrived just in time to see him once more. I

was dreadfully shocked at his appearance, for he had kept his fever and everything a secret from me, lest I might hasten back to him and lose the benefit of an excursion which he was confident would do me good. He loved me tenderly, though his manner was austere."

She sat down before the breakfast-table, rested her forehead on her hand, and bent her eyes on the cloth while her tears were dropping fast. He advanced towards the door, still looking at her face, which was partly hid by her hand, but he could see her beautiful mouth—that mouth on which ten thousand kisses of Davenport had overlaid his own—the tenderest, the truest, and the first. He gazed on that slender waist, round which the clergyman alone had now a right to wreath his arms, but which had been growing against his for many and many a year. If she had looked up then and seen the expression of his dark eyes, her unassisted strength could scarcely have saved her. She might have been ready to follow him to the darkest den in that vast metropolis, or to the wildest rock that beetled over the Norwegian coast. But she kept her head down to conceal her tears. Then a well-known step was heard on the stairs. She started up, swept her face with her handkerchief, and forthwith the door opened and in sprang Davenport, nearly knocking down Campbell, who was just going out.

"Bless me! what's the matter?" cried Davenport; "Oh! I beg your pardon, sir, I am glad to see you."

In spite of all his efforts Campbell looked confused and did not know what to say. But the woman was equal to the emergency, although that woman was the artless Amelia. She ran to meet him and laid her hand on his wrist.

"My darling," he cried, "I am happy to see youdown so early,—but you look fretted—"

"Arthur dear," said she, interrupting him, "this gentleman whom you invited to call, is going away to-morrow, and he has so many engagements for to-day, that he could not come at all unless he came at this hour, so I asked him to breakfast—" she could proceed no farther.

"My love, I am happy to see him, and it is very friendly of him to come to breakfast." Then, turning to Campbell, "Do sit down, doctor, by your old friend," and he placed them together on the sofa, where they had been just sitting with clasped hands. Then he rang for the urn, and commenced making the tea and coffee, which he had always done since his wife's last confinement, thinking her too delicate for even that exertion. When they were seated at breakfast, he began :—

"Dr. Campbell, are you son to the Dr. Campbell who had a house close to Warner Park ? he was very ill when I was on a visit with my father-in-law."

"Yes: he is now dead."

"Oh! I am very sorry to hear it. Then you and my wife were near neighbours: often together I suppose in old times."

"Yes; my father and I often dined with Mr. Warner."

"Why, I suppose you were regular playfellows; eh, darling?"

She stammered out; "I believe so ;—it is so long ago—I forget."

Campbell gave her a look as much as to say—"You should not play traitor to the past, although you may wish to avoid speaking of it."

It was hard for the poor young woman to manage between them both and her own racked feelings. Davenport next entertained Campbell with a description of his babies, and their wonderful beauty and intelligence. Mrs. Davenport looked as guilty as if she had never been joined in

holy wedlock to any one. When this subject was exhausted, Davenport cried out:—

"I suppose, doctor, you are married."

"Oh, no!" answered Campbell, with a shudder, while Milly turned paler than ever.

"Well, you have certainly lost no time, only medical men generally marry when they begin to practise; but you seem quite horrified at the idea. It is a very serious engagement certainly to enter into, and should not be done for the sake of expediency. Whenever you do take the step, the best wish I can possibly form for you is, that you may draw such a prize as I have done."

He looked exultingly at his wife, expecting one of her smiles, but was somewhat damped to see her staring at the coffee-pot with her features white and rigid. As to Campbell, he could not swallow another morsel; he rose from table trusting that his bill of pains and penalties had been read to the end. But the dregs of the cup of trembling were not yet wrung out.

Davenport was quite alarmed at his wife's appearance. He turned to Campbell.

"That man I have consulted here says there is nothing the matter with Mrs. Davenport, but really I can't believe him. Do, Dr. Campbell, for old acquaintance' sake, just feel her pulse and tell me whether it is not up to one hundred and twenty; she gets such hectic fits; see now, she is quite flushed, having been a minute ago as white as paper."

He caught her hand, but she actually insisted her pulse should not be felt, for that she was very well.

However, Davenport knit his brows, looked determined, drew her to Campbell, and placed her hand firmly in his. His heart beat madly; the whole seemed such a bitter mockery, as if a laughing fiend had laid the plot. He had parted from her his betrothed wife; he had found her

again after a separation of six years; he loved her more than ever; she was led up to him and her hand pressed into his by—her husband! Could he act his part correctly in such a cruel drama? Instead of letting his fingers glide gracefully to her wrist *secundum artem*, he kept hold of her hand with a convulsive clutch. Then seeing Davenport towering before him, he made an attempt to pull out his watch,—as though the speed of *that* pulse *then* could be measured—the frantic throes of human passion matched to the mechanical dottings of time,—and by *him!* He succeeded in getting out the watch, but his hand was shaking so violently that he gave the guard an awkward jerk and it came unfastened; the watch dropped on the floor at their feet, and the crystal was broken to atoms.

Davenport, frightened and vexed, ran to lift it up, and Amelia, taking advantage of the confusion, snatched her hand from Campbell and flew to her room.

Campbell made a desperate effort to compose himself, and received the watch quietly from Davenport.

"I am extremely sorry the glass is broken," said the latter.

"Oh, it does not matter," said Campbell, looking at it; "I will get it replaced immediately."

"Has it stopped?" asked Davenport.

"Yes."

"I am surprised at that," rejoined the other; "it fell on its face, and all the shock of the fall came on the crystal."

"It is strange," said Campbell; "but it is heavy. It can be put to rights in a few minutes probably, but one does not like such a thing happening just as one is going to feel a pulse; such bad luck never happened to me before."

He tried to laugh; he was afraid Davenport was surprised at his extraordinary agitation.

"Ha! are you superstitious?" said Davenport, smiling.

"No; I was only jesting."

"But where is that girl gone to?" said her husband, looking round; "she is a most provoking creature; has made her escape!"

"You need not call her back; she is not feverish,—I know by the touch of her hand,—you might have seen me feeling it," said the unfortunate Campbell. "Keep her quiet, take her home to her children as soon as possible, and she will be quite well."

He then went away. Davenport felt depressed. He sat down by the fire musing on the strange appearance and agitation of both, but no suspicion crossed his mind, for he was persuaded by what his wife said at breakfast that they had not met since they were mere children.

The landlady came to take away the things. She was a friendly, cordial Scotchwoman, who had come to London to try her fortune at letting lodgings. Davenport talked an immensity to every one who came in his way; he had a chat with Mrs. Glennie every morning when she was removing the breakfast-things, but now he sat pensively without speaking. Mrs. Glennie was obliged to begin.

"Ye're na sae gleesome to-day as usual, sir; is the leddie worse?"

"Indeed she certainly is; she looks shockingly this morning."

"Weel, she does look pale since she came in yesterday. Her strength is so pulled down. Twa bairns in twenty-one months, as she tauld me hersel',—too much for the dear leddie! aw, it's a shame, sir!"

"Mind your own business, Mrs. Glennie."

"And I wad be glad to know how I am to mind it in that respeck; is not my gude man dead these two years?" Davenport laughed. "You may well laugh wi'

your bonnie leddie up-stairs, but I have neither husband nor bairns."

"I wish you would tell me what to do with my 'bonnie leddie;' she will not mind a word I say, ate scarcely a bit of breakfast, and has been looking the colour of death since she came down."

"Oh, not quite sae bad as that now; and that was a verra prattie gentleman you had to breakfast, sae saft-ee'd and gracefu' and sad-looking too; when I saw him and my leddie sitting on the sofa together, I thocht I never beheld sae prattie a pair in a' my life."

"Pooh! his prattiness is no matter," said Davenport: "but he is a physician, and an old friend of hers, and I wished him just to feel her pulse—those great fellows are in such a hurry, and don't listen to half what you have to say;—but what do you think? she refused; and I had to pull her up to him and give him her hand, and if he had not held it tight she would have run away; but when he took out his watch the awkward fellow dropped it, and smash it went at their feet and stopped, and in the hubbub she ran away, and I'm sure I don't know what I shall do now except take her to Dr. H—— again."

Mrs. Glennie was silent and thoughtful for a few minutes, and then she said: "Weel, God bless them baith, and mak' them live for mony a lang year!"

"Why do you say that, and who are the 'baith' that you speak of?" said he.

"I mean your leddie and that sweet gentleman."

"Why do you couple them together? is not she my wife?"

"True eneugh, and I hope ye'll have her till she is an auld woman, but—"

"But what?"

"Why, I had a grandmother—"

"So had we all, I suspect."

"Ay, ay; but my grannie was an unco wise woman; she kenned the future—oh, marvellous weel! I micht hae picket up a muckle deal from her, but I was a wilfu' wild bit boddie—"

"What's this to the purpose?" cried Davenport, "I am in haste up-stairs."

"Ye've aiblins heard eneugh?"

"What the deuce have you to say?—say it at once."

"Weel, then, my grandmother would have said, if she had been tauld that those twa beautiful creturs were standing with their hands joined, and that the watch drapped down between them and then stapped—why, she wad hae said that time wad stap for them baith about the same moment, and that they wad gae hand in hand to heaven together."

Davenport turned very red. "This is good enough! My domestic concerns seem to be a very agreeable foundation for you to build your fooleries upon. You'll oblige me by getting some other stuff to spin your fancies out of. I say your grandmother was a mischievous old blockhead, and you would have done well to have left behind in the Highlands the good education she gave you. And if you attempt to say one word of this rubbish to Mrs. Davenport—"

"I wasna intending it; but they'll gae togither," she persisted, with a nod of her head, and a mysterious look.

"Hold your tongue, Mrs. Glennie; I consider you are taking a very great liberty with me by maundering in this manner about my wife's destiny, and linking it with that of a man I know nothing about."

"I ken my distance verra weel, but when the heart is fu' the mouth maun speak, and I jist tauld it to yoursel', but I wunna trouble ony ither folk wi' it."

"Then I can't but think you have chosen a very strange confidant for the overflowings of your heart," said he.

"But wha says they mayn't baith live to eighty?" pleaded she, frightened at seeing him so excited. "Did I say they wad tak' the awfu' loup next year, or in seven years, or in twanty?"

"No; but what wonder if two very old people died about the same time? it would be well worth a prophecy indeed. If you mean anything, you mean that they will die young,—but I am making a fool of myself staying here talking to you."

He went off to his wife's room, and spent the next hour caressing and fondling her,—a treatment that she had enjoyed very much until this day, but now she seemed impatient under it. She was also obliged to listen quietly but with a burning heart, while he pronounced Campbell an awkward bungler, too nervous for his profession; and while he calculated on the amount of fortitude he could muster for an operation; and while he finally settled to his satisfaction that Campbell was unstrung by having spent half the night before at some raking party, for that those unmarried good-looking young doctors were often very irregular in their habits, and that there was nothing like a clergyman, *et cetera*. He then charged her not to *prate* so much to Mrs. Glennie, for that she was an officious, forward, superstitious baggage.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CALM AT LAST.

"And thus together, yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand but joined in heart,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each,
Was still some solace." BYRON.

WE do not presume to say that Mr. Davenport was unworthy of Amelia Warner. No one could prize her more highly than he did; but then there were hundreds of women in England who could make him full as happy as she did, but there were none who could, equally with her, satisfy all the wants and wishes of Dr. Campbell's heart. He had taught her, and trained her, and fashioned her for himself, she being composed of elements that fell almost naturally into that disposition into which his taste was inclined to throw them.

Davenport's cup was small, and she could fill it to the brim, and double the supply if that were requisite; Campbell's was twice as large as Davenport's, and she was capable of filling it too, and now the redundancy of her wealth was overflowing from her husband's cup, and going to waste on barren sands, while Campbell's cup was empty and his heart was parched.

Not long after this meeting in London, the old vicar of Northwood died, and the Davenports removed to their new home. Mr. Davenport, who soon forgot the unlucky

scene in the breakfast-room, and Mrs. Glennie's prophecy into the bargain, took a decided fancy to Dr. Campbell, and wished to have him constantly at his house, but at first the latter went there as seldom as possible; he should break himself in by degrees patiently to see Milly in the possession of another. But the two behaved bravely on the whole; they re-opened the book of their life with the errata carefully inserted; his were, "For 'Milly,' read 'Mrs. Davenport;' for 'love,' read 'worship.'" Hers were, "For 'Robert,' read 'Dr. Campbell;' for 'love,' read 'friendship.'" They certainly did not keep very long to these rules; it soon became "Milly," and "Robert," when there was no third person present; she oscillated between love and friendship until at length she combined the terms, and the result was something for which she could find no name; but she was convinced it did not interfere with the place her husband should hold in her heart. As to his new word, "worship," he was very true to it, but it was rather added to love than substituted for it.

For nearly a year after Mrs. Davenport went to the vicarage, she would never trust herself alone with Campbell; if her husband was out when he called, she sent for the children; they were a medium of communication between them, which brought them near without too close contact; each said something to the eldest boy, both smiled at his attempts to answer, and then they talked about him, and so by degrees they became tolerably easy together; if he was miserable he kept it to himself; as to her, she had interests and occupations of which he was destitute; he was the one really to be pitied.

It was strange that he did not prefer alienating himself from her for ever, to thus keeping his wounds open by constantly seeing and meeting her; but he loved her so intensely, that such a life was to him more bearable than

everlasting separation. Certainly, few disappointed lovers have sentiments similar to his, and it would have been a wiser and a happier course for both, if they had settled to meet no more. Much as he laboured to school his feelings, and chain his passion within its silent cell, there were occasions when his temper (which, poor fellow! was bad enough) conquered all the force of his reason, and hurried him into outbreaks which were certainly much at variance with the resolutions he had formed, and the course he usually pursued towards her whose peace he held sacred. These outbreaks seldom occurred, certainly, but they should not have occurred at all; showing too clearly that the Titan, though motionless, was only slumbering in the deep volcano, ready at any time to spring up in its pristine vigour, and throw defiance in the face of fictitious conquest and fancied dreams that it had been chained for ever.

After some time Miss Purdon returned from school. She came home beautiful, winning, wild; a coquette, to use the mildest term; with passions that had been fomented rather than subdued by her residence in an establishment where youth is supposed to be fashioned, tamed, and regulated. But it is impossible for the mistress of a *pension* to prevent the contagion of bad example; Miss Purdon had fallen among several dangerous companions.

She was engaged to her cousin, Julius Livingstone; that is, her father and his mother had set their hearts on the union, from the children's earliest years, and Julius, young as he was, most earnestly desired it also; but however she might have thought it "great fun" to call him her little husband, and play and romp with him all day before she went to school, on her return she seemed to have forgotten him, or at least only to regard him as a cousin, with whom she was pretty well resolved on having no closer connexion. But of this change in her sentiments he never heard; he

was in India when she returned. Neither was her father aware of her altered feelings—if we can apply such a term as "feeling" to the previous state of her childish mind.

When Mr. Purdon talked to her of Julius, and reminded her that they were to be married when she was a little older, she appeared to acquiesce; she had not courage to shock him by a refusal. The air at the rectory was much colder and damper than what she was accustomed to at Versailles, and she got an attack on her chest just after she came home. Her anxious father had Campbell immediately for her, and he assured him that it was only a catarrh, and that she would get quite well when the warm weather arrived; still the doting parent was miserable, and was continually sending for him.

Campbell attended on her with great reluctance; he hardly knew which he was to consider her, a child or a woman; if she was a child, she went on in a way in which so old a child should not go on; if she was a woman, she was shamefully forward. Her strange mixture of naïveté, coquetry, and earnest feeling, sometimes astonished, dazzled, confounded him. He was only seven-and-twenty, and he was often sorely tried. If she had fallen into good hands at a critical period of her life, he thought she might have been made a most brilliant, fascinating creature; but now her faults seemed to have been brought into prominency, and her bright points seemed to give them a false and fatal lustre, instead of flinging them back into the shade, and shining forth themselves as the ornament of their possessor. She might, perhaps, have made a glorious being,—one capable of realising a poet's dream,—of being meet partner for a southern poet's heart;—but she could not have resembled the crystalline purity of Amelia Warner. However, it was now too late to recast her, and to ponder on what she might have been was painful and unavailing. He knew she was to be married to Julius Livingstone, and

he also knew she did not love him;—too good reason he had to know that.

The reader is acquainted with the current story of Miss Purdon's illness and death, as we have given Miss Bolton's narrative of that event in the early part of our history. It may be remembered that Dr. Campbell, as well as Miss Purdon, objected to having any other assistance called in, and that the young lady died in a few hours after her father yielded to the entreaties of his daughter and her physician that he would abstain from seeking any further advice. So a young practitioner of eight and twenty was at his own desire alone responsible for this awful catastrophe.

Mr. Purdon seemed certainly satisfied that she would have died of excitement if he had persevered in his intention; this might have been some consolation to Campbell, but still the blow was tremendous. Half an hour after the death, he rode back to his cottage with the speed of a demon. Arrived there, the excitement was over, and he sank down in one of those fainting fits to which he was liable when any great mental anguish fell upon him, and the obstinate duration of which was attributed by his medical attendants to the impaired action of the heart.

His servant procured the best assistance she was able, but remedies were unavailing for the present. When day dawned she hurried to the Vicarage to apprise the Davenports of his situation. They both flew to him, for no entreaties could prevent Amelia from accompanying her husband. Shortly after they arrived, he opened his eyes, and the first object they met was Milly's face bending over him, while Davenport sat by him holding his hand.

This sight revived him; when he could speak he said:—

"Have you heard?"

They begged he would not allude to it. There was nothing to be done but to take him to the Vicarage;

he could not be left alone in his cottage with no one but his servant. He was conveyed thither and put to bed, and Davenport and the cook and Milly occasionally nursed him like an infant for several days. Mr. Davenport was happy to be of use to him, for he was unremitting in his attentions to the children, who were often ill.

When he recovered a little from his stupefaction, while still in bed he expressed a strong wish to see Mrs. Ford, and immediately a beautiful pony phaeton that Mr. Warner had lately sent to his daughter was despatched to fetch her.

Mrs. Ford was closeted with him for an hour, and when she went away he appeared relieved. When he was able to come into the drawing-room, Milly gave up the whole day to him, sat beside him, and read to him. This seemed to give him more comfort than anything else; if she stopped to rest for a moment he would say "go on," and those were all the words he said for some time.

The Davenports were astonished at his situation; shocking as it was to have so precious a child as Miss Purdon die in his hands without any other physician to share the responsibility, no view that could be taken of a medical man's feelings on such an occasion could account for his sufferings. Neither of them thought he was in love with her: poor Milly knew too well the state of his heart; and Davenport declared that for the first six months after she returned home he had spoken of her with disapprobation, and that for several months before her death he had nearly given up visiting at the Rectory, and did not speak of her at all. But their attention to him was unremitting; when he was able to get up to breakfast, having dressed and fully prepared himself, he would sink down on a chair in his apartment, and not rise from it till noon, unless Mr. Davenport went for him and led him to the breakfast-room; Mrs. Davenport alone could induce him to eat

When her husband went out on his parochial duties he revived a little; he would lie on the sofa with Milly sitting on a stool beside him, either reading to him or speaking gently and low, with those dear lips close to his cheek; then he would shed an abundance of tears and that relieved him. Sometimes he called for the eldest boy, who was particularly under his care, for he was delicate, and of whom he was very fond, as he had his mother's hair and eyes, and was of a gentle, melancholy disposition. This child he would place beside him on the sofa, where the little creature would lie quite content for half the day with his arm round his "darling daddy," for in spite of all his mamma's efforts to prevent him, that was what he persisted in calling Campbell, thus distinguishing him from his father whom he called "pappy."

Such was his condition that Mrs. Davenport at one time took it into her head that he might cut his throat when he was shaving; then poor Davenport was obliged to rise betimes and go to his room before he was dressed, then walk up and down chatting to him, but privately watching him until the operation was over. In fact nothing could exceed his attention, and Campbell was so won by his kindness that a new feeling of regard for him sprang up in his mind, and he excused many little things about him, that used to irritate him before, and he even thought sometimes that, since he had lost Milly, he was pleased that Davenport should have her in preference to any other man he had met.

The relations, too, between himself and Milly, were placed on a happier footing: for a quarter of a year (that was the time he spent at the Vicarage) she had tended him, watched him, amused him, comforted him; and he had found peace and consolation and joy in her society and her devotion to him, under the conviction at the same time that she could never be his. This was a point

gained; they found they might enjoy themselves together without being everything to each other. They found they could sit together at the same book without dreading the fate of Francesca and Paolo; there could be a union of sentiments and thoughts and amusements without his heart sickening at the consciousness that there the union must cease.

He had been so struck down, so crushed, so near insanity, that he was glad to receive with thanks from his guardian angel all that she was able to give. She had been for the last four years the great sorrow of his life, in that he had lost her for ever; but now a more bitter sorrow, a sorrow that seemed steeped in remorse, had succeeded; and by a new turn in the wheel of his destiny the first grief was changed into a joy and a consolation; for Mrs. Davenport, fettered as she was, could soothe his soul to calmer thoughts, could rouse his imagination to some of its early soarings;—ay! and could even, while the spell of her presence was upon him, bid away the Eumenides themselves, when "they tossed their torches on high, and pointed to"—Ashcombe Churchyard! So when Milly and her generous helpmate had raised him up, and bade him live, he resolved that he *would* live with more resignation to his fate than he had done before; he would live, not only for Milly, but for her husband and children too.

A new interest, also, had been born in his heart, on which we cannot be now more explicit; but which, in a measure, divided it with the great passion that had formerly engrossed its entire strength. He was not always thinking of Mrs. Davenport, and of her alone. It was as if a canal had been cut from an abounding and overflowing river, and reduced its waters to a state of equilibrium.

The whole force of his affections was not accumulated

on one point. So he roused himself up to begin work again, for he knew that work was more necessary than ever, and he returned to his cottage from the Vicarage, after the lapse of three months, a sadly altered, but still a resolute man. Such of his friends as had required other attendance during his recess, soon returned to him, for there was no one equal to him in the neighbourhood. He got better by degrees, but there was ever a heavy weight on his heart, which Mrs. Davenport alone could alleviate, and with her he spent as much time as he could spare. This was not, of course, exactly as it should be—but, for the present, he had been purified in the furnace of affliction—he came to her crushed and humbled, craving for pity and friendship, content to let love remain for evermore among the things that were. After we have suffered some desperate visitation in which self-reproach is strongly mingled, our virtuous resolutions are of the highest kind; those who keep to them to the end of their lives, notwithstanding every favourable change in their lot, and the deadening influence of time, are among the truly great; those who relax, according as the event which prompted their heroic determinations fades away in the distance, form by far the greater multitude. I do not attempt to place Dr. Campbell in the first category; the Platonic purity of the new frame of mind with which he had invested himself with regard to Milly certainly did not last. Love may be converted into hatred, but into friendship—never! But there were constant safeguards about him; the gratitude he owed to the devoted kindness of Mr. Davenport—the purity and integrity of Mrs. Davenport's soul.

Milly did her best to soothe and enliven her afflicted visitor—no difficult office was that—their souls were congenial; hers and Davenport's were not. For Campbell the passages in Tennyson were marked; to be

admired with him, or explained by him. Davenport would laugh at a poet whose meaning was not apparent on the surface, and would send her off to Jeremy Taylor's Sermons, where she would find first-rate poetry expressed in the clearest language, without the useless jingle of rhymes. For Campbell the last beautiful song was practised; Davenport liked very well to get her to play some dashing, brilliant piece for him while he was arranging a sermon in his brain,—it quickened and warmed his imagination, he said; but Campbell would stand beside her and sing along with her. Wordsworth had been their grandest companion at Warner Park, but now Young's 'Night Thoughts' were preferred; they suited the present state of Campbell's mind better than any other English poem, but he turned with a sort of horrror from the third Night and would not permit it to be opened; Milly affirmed it was her favourite Night, but she was told not to speak of it. And the Italian that he had learned for her sake was often in requisition; they read the 'Aminta' together in the garden, particularly dwelling on the second scene of the first act, which reminded them of their early days and their first childish affection, for he was not afraid to speak of those things now:—

"Congiunti eran gli alberghi,
Ma più congiunti i cori;
Conforme era 'l etate,
Ma 'l pensier più conforme."

And they walked together in the fields once more; as innocent in their relations to one another, but not so happy.

There was a little arbour in Mrs. Davenport's flower-garden that Dr. Campbell had made for her with his own hands during the last week of his three months' residence at the vicarage. He had twined rose-bushes and eglantine through its rustic framework, and had fenced it

thickly round with evergreens. Here they often sat with little Jemmy between them, and as they bent their heads over him to caress him, if their foreheads touched, and rested against one another for a brief space, will any blame them? He was a stricken deer and the touch healed him.

After the painful picture we have been obliged to give of Dr. Campbell's sufferings, it is a relief to dwell on this mellowed aspect of affairs; on this return, if not to sunshine, at least to a settled, though misty, sky. To breathe freely under a glimpse of mercy is a matter for thankfulness: with all its "wild whirling eddies and mad foam-oceans"—this world, after all, is still "God's world."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE HEIRESS ON THE BRINK OF TWO PRECIPICES.

"O gentle Proteus, Love 's a mighty lord,
And hath so humbled me, as I confess,
There is no woe to his correction,
Nor to his service, no such joy on earth."
SHAKESPEARE.

MISS NEVILLE had no need to oblige Letty Cope to feign illness in order to bring Dr. Campbell to Sunville. A few days after the dinner at Holly Park she herself became the first to require him. She was driving about her grounds in a pony-chaise and some sheep suddenly ran across the walk and frightened the animal, which set off in a gallop, and she, fearing it might upset the vehicle down a steep that lay to her right, jumped out, and the wheel passing over her foot injured it severely. Her mother immediately sent for Dr. Campbell, and during a week he was in daily attendance. Miss Neville's accident was indeed rather serious; she was for a good while totally unable to walk. She was not fond of reading, and it was a difficult matter to amuse her. She used to sit in the window with her foot on a stool watching for Campbell an hour before the time at which he usually made his appearance. After his professional duties were over she always expected he would sit and talk to her, she was so dull,—her sister always reading, she complained.

One afternoon on her entreating of him as usual to stay and chat to her, he said :—

"Why do not you read sometimes, Miss Neville? it would surely be more amusing to you than to sit unoccupied the whole day."

"Now, Dr. Campbell, I am extremely glad you have spoken to her on that subject," said Maria, lifting up her head from some music she was copying. "I am tired recommending book after book, and she will not open one of them. There is the 'Decline and Fall' lying close to her on the table; I am astonished she can resist it."

"What is the 'Decline and Fall'?" said Miss Neville peevishly; "is it a treatise on consumption?"

"Miss Neville!" exclaimed Campbell, looking astonished; "is it possible you never heard of Gibbon and his great work?"

"Oh, Gibbon!—yes, I believe I have; was not he the fat, awkward fellow who in making love to Madame de Staël's mother dropped on his knees before her, but when it was time to rise again he was much too unwieldy to do so, and the lady was obliged to ring for her servant, and desire him to assist the great historian to his feet? That is all I know about him,—quite enough;—what a pretty lover he was!"

"I pronounce him a lover worthy of all praise," said Campbell smiling; "he fell on his knees to her, being, no doubt, fully aware that he could never get up again, but might remain in that position until the day of his death; —and yet, regardless of all, he knelt! Decidedly he shines still more as a lover than as a philosopher and a historian."

Campbell seldom said a lively thing, but when he did it became him greatly. There was something so gentle in his playfulness, and yet so arch, that it had a peculiar way of reaching the heart, and his shafts were all the

more unerring that he himself took no pains to direct them. The glance that shot from his eye towards Miss Neville in accompaniment to these words was natural to him; he would have looked thus at another man, or a child; to her it seemed flooded with meaning;—fraught with a language intended for her alone. Maria Neville thought he had certainly very captivating manners and a charming face. Miss Neville could not set him so far apart from her as to pass an opinion on him. She did not think him one thing or another thing, but the more she looked at him, and the more she heard him speak, the more was her soul troubled within her.

After a pause he said:—

"How singular was the lot of that young Swiss, Mademoiselle Curchod! The first and only love of Gibbon; the wife of Necker, and the mother of Madame de Staël! She had fine qualities, accomplishments, and learning, I have no doubt, but they are obscured, lost, annihilated by the blaze of the geniuses with which she was so closely connected. Her environments destroyed her individuality, and such should the lot of a woman be: her excellences known only through the high character of the man who thought her worthy of being his everlasting companion. Fame should not ring out her sacred name to the ends of the earth. Better to make one good or great man happy than to have admiring millions at your feet. I should rather have been Madame Necker than Madame de Staël."

He sighed; he began to think of Mrs. Davenport; she was the woman of all others suited to make a great man happy.

Little Miss Neville dreamt of the subject that was occupying his mind. In fact she fancied he might be touched with some feeling for her situation; conspicuous by her large fortune, and more likely perhaps to illustrate

a man, than to be illustrated by him. She looked at Campbell with deep interest; she longed to learn what was going on within his heart. At length she said :—

"A woman may surpass her husband in some things and yet act with such delicacy and tact that neither he nor the world should be conscious of it."

"It would be hard to conceal the superiority from him, it would be much better it did not exist," answered he.

She continued :—

"Worldly superiority, such as fortune, in a woman above a man is not such a bar to domestic happiness as intellectual ;—what do you think ?"

"It need not, ought not to be any," he answered. "That would be an ungenerous nature indeed, that could pride itself on having brought wealth or cumbrous state to a partner whose only disadvantage consisted in poverty. If the minds are well matched, those poor distinctions fade into nothingness."

He sighed again. He thought how Milly would have scorned her gold compared to the qualities she loved in him.

Miss Neville felt an indescribable satisfaction at hearing his last words. But his sighs,—what could be the meaning of them? Was he a disappointed man? Was that song she had heard him sing the genuine effusion of a broken heart? or did he sigh because the world had produced for him none of those noble pelf-despising souls, whom his fancy could fashion, but his experience had not reached? And yet she thought there was one not far from him—one that he might find external to his fancy —embodying his dreams.

He made a movement to depart.

"Do not be in such haste," she said ; "tell me what book to read, and I will read it."

He sat down again, and tossed over some of the volumes that were scattered on the table, and turned up a novel that was then very popular.

"Have you read this?" he inquired.

"Oh, no! I am sure it is by some horribly learned man; it is full of long, hard words taken from the Latin."

He looked into it.

"I should say this was written by a person who did not understand Latin, but was ambitious of writing in a powerful and erudite style; some lady with a masculine mind," he added, with a touch of satire in his tone. He went on. "The real scholar's books abound in Saxon words."

"Do you think so?" said she. "I should have supposed that their familiarity with Latin would be the cause why the works of learned men should be overflowing with words taken from that language."

"My notion is different," said he. "Real scholars, educated in a university, are in the habit of getting long pieces of Latin to put into English, and to do this perfectly well, they must choose words quite unlike those in the passage that is set; so they naturally pick out the most expressive Saxon words they can think of, and thus a pure, sound, English phraseology is acquired in the very heart of classical studies."

She seemed greatly pleased with this observation.

"Strong-minded ladies with masculine understandings," added he with a wicked smile, "are very much addicted to adorning their productions with Latin words."

"Don't you hate ladies with 'masculine understandings'?" inquired Miss Neville.

"I own I don't like them," said he. "I love to see the harmonies preserved in every department of nature and art. A woman's mind should be in union with her form,

and thus it may be graceful, polished, sparkling. A proper degree of culture is to me indispensable."

"Do tell me of some book I ought to read, and I will certainly read it," she said eagerly.

"I am sure I don't know," said he, looking puzzled; "I cannot tell what you have a taste for, or what you may have already perused."

"I can satisfy you on the latter point," said Maria; "she has not read a single book in the house. Now there's Beattie's 'Elements of Moral Science'——"

"Oh, Miss Maria Neville," interrupted Campbell, "that would never answer for her! Is it possible," he continued, laughing, "that you study it?"

"Yes, certainly; and I think it very beautiful."

After some discussion, it was settled that Miss Neville should commence Paley's 'Theology,' and Robertson's 'Charles the Fifth.'"

Campbell thought he could now get away, and began to move towards the door.

"If you will waive ceremony, and stay to dine," said Miss Neville, "I should be very glad, and so would mamma; she is now in the garden."

Campbell thanked her, but said he was engaged to Mr. Davenport.

"That is provoking; who is Mr. Davenport?"

"The vicar of Northwood."

"True, true; I am very stupid; he visited us, accompanied by his wife—a pretty little red-haired woman."

"Not red-haired," said Campbell, quickly.

"Well, perhaps not, but something of that shade."

"It is not what is commonly called red at all, Alicia," said Maria; "it cannot be described, but it is quite to my taste."

Campbell looked pleased at Maria, and said to Miss Neville:—

"She is not little, either; just the right height; your size exactly."

This gratified Miss Neville, and she began to praise Mrs. Davenport.

"She is a very pretty creature, certainly, and so soft and gentle; but her husband is such a chatty, rattling man, he did not give her an opportunity of saying a word: she did not open her lips while they were here;—probably she talks more when he is not present."

"She talks enough," said Campbell, "at least according to my notions;—but I must not keep her waiting dinner." He then departed.

"What a treat it is to converse with a man who has such a nice mind!" said Miss Neville to her sister.

"It is a new thing to hear you express approbation of people with 'nice minds,'" answered Maria; "we have mixed among men of every form and shade of intellect, and if you liked any of them it certainly was not for his mental qualities. I am glad the dispensary doctor of Northwood is leading you to a sounder way of thinking."

Miss Neville replied testily:—

"I never set my face against persons of good intellects, if they had not disagreeable points to counteract them; this man has an attractive way of bringing one round to like literary pursuits;—and—I would thank you not to call him 'the dispensary doctor.'"

"Why, really, it is only what you called him yourself the other evening at Holly Park! you spoke of him, and his situation as such, with sovereign contempt; it is not easy to find out when it is your pleasure that he should be laughed at, or when treated with respect and admiration. It is no disgrace to be a dispensary doctor; he is a very nice man in his way."

"I do not know what you mean by 'his way.'"

"It is a way that you spoke of with some ridicule in

Mrs. Routledge's drawing-room; a way that obliges him, as you observed, to poke his nose into old men's sore legs, and to prescribe for rheumatic grannies of the lower orders, or something in that strain;—I am sure I forget all you said, but it struck me as amounting to rudeness, as if he was scarcely fit to be asked to Mrs. Routledge's table."

Miss Neville felt this keenly, but said nothing—for a very good reason—because she had nothing to say. Maria concluded:—

"I, for my part, have the same opinion of him now that I had at the beginning, which is, that he is a very gentleman-like man, with a respectable profession; and a great convenience when accidents happen. Shall I assist you to the sofa?" (seeing Miss Neville endeavouring to rise). But the heiress haughtily declined any aid from one who had said some disagreeable things, and, moreover, lay under the unpardonable crime of being unanswerable. She hopped to her couch on one foot, lay down, and began to study Paley with much diligence.

The next morning Miss Neville was settled in her post of observation a considerable time before noon. It was not Dr. Campbell's day for visiting her, certainly, but if he thought he had spent an agreeable hour with her on the last occasion, he might seize on any excuse for repeating the visit as soon as possible: she had given other men less encouragement to cultivate her acquaintance than she had given him, and they had followed it up gladly and assiduously. Her mother, sister, and Miss Cope were all in the room, variously employed. At last Mrs. Neville said:—

"My dear, you had better go and lie down on the sofa; there is no use in watching for him; he told me himself that if he called every second day now, it would be quite sufficient."

"Really, mamma, it would be a great advantage if you would just mention who 'he' is; if your head is so full of

some gentleman or another, of course you pay him a great compliment, but you cannot expect that those about you will be able to name instinctively the subject of your morning's meditation."

"Yes, indeed, mamma," said Maria, who seldom agreed with her sister in any argument, "it is quite ridiculous of you to use a pronoun in that manner, without giving the least hint of the antecedent; I know there was not much trouble taken with girls when you were a child, but you have had lessons enough from me, I am sure."

"Maria, you always talk as if I was eighty years old," answered the mother; "I can tell you I did not stretch so far back into the eighteenth century as you would intimate; born in the same year as the poor dear Princess Charlotte! I had an excellent governess, and masters too; there is no bearing the conceit and presumption of girls now-a-days. And you, Alicia, know perfectly well that Dr. Campbell is the person I mean; who else could be expected at this early hour?"

"Then if you do mean him, ma'am, you are much mistaken in supposing I am watching for him; I don't expect him, and don't require him; I suppose I may sit in my own window and look out at my own grass growing, without being pronounced a particular oddity."

"Just so!" said Miss Cope; "you actually can almost see it growing. This morning, when I had the looking-glass in the window, and was dressing my hair, I could hardly mind what I was about, I was so charmed with the grass and the trees, and the whole sheet of emerald, in short, that lay before me."

"Well, Letty Cope, it certainly must have been a glorious prospect that could divert your eye from the object in the glass; you need not enlarge on it any further, I could not be more strongly impressed with its witchery."

Here a horse's hoofs were heard crunching the gravel

before the door. In spite of herself she turned a little red, and shot a quick glance towards the rider. It was only a mounted livery-servant. She buried her face in a bouquet that her mother had brought her, and pretended to smell it. The footman came in and handed Mrs. Neville a note. When she had read it, she said:—

"Alicia, this is from Mrs. Smyth; she and the major are most anxious to know how you are going on—I think I may say favourably."

"How people do worry me!" cried Miss Neville. "One would think I had tumbled down the Falls of Niagara. Say I am quite well, to stop their teasing. Or, wait—no—for then they will be expecting me to be going over there perpetually, to sit listening to that old bore with his parchment cheeks and glassy eyes, telling a pack of insufferable stories through his nose about his Peninsular campaigns, when he was 'a ruddy young sub.' Tell them, at once, that I'm dead, to have done with them for ever."

"My love, what things you say!" exclaimed Mrs. Neville. "I am afraid you are in great pain, you are so fidgety. What answer *shall* I give? are you worse?"

"Such a fuss about a complimentary note!" said Miss Neville. "I wonder, ma'am, you are not ashamed to harass me so, when I am in this miserable, crippled state."

"I declare, Alicia," said Maria, "it makes a great difference to mamma which she is to say—you are quite well and ready to dance at their ball next week, or that you are dead and they are expected to send their coach to attend your body to the cemetery. Mamma, take your pen and write what your common sense dictates."

Poor Mrs. Neville sat down to her desk, and commenced; and—like many people with little intellect, to whom the composing of a note even is a sort of job—she

whispered each paragraph to herself, as she went along, not unheard by her daughter:—"Many thanks for kind inquiries"—"going on favourably under the care of the Northwood dispensary doctor"—"fortunate in finding a medical man above the average in an obscure village"—"country factotums often bunglers."

Miss Neville could hold out no longer.

"What do you mean, by such language, ma'am?" she cried, her eyes flashing and her cheek scarlet; "how can you dare to speak of a learned and accomplished gentleman in such terms as these? 'Dispensary doctor! country factotum!!' I will tear the note in ribbons at your feet! Letty Cope, come here!"

Miss Cope started up and stood petrified for a moment.

"Don't stand there like a fool, Letty Cope, but give me your arm and assist me to that desk!" cried the heiress.

"Don't stir, Miss Cope!" said Mrs. Neville.

The unfortunate Miss Cope stood trembling between her two patronesses, not knowing what to do, with uncomfortable visions of her trunk packed in the hall. Maria, in another window, at her work-table, sat gazing at her sister with a look of amazement and inquietude.

"Alicia," said Mrs. Neville, "I am more astonished at your behaviour than I am able to express. Only for your present trying situation I should certainly take marked notice of your language."

Mrs. Neville always found some reason for bearing with her daughter's imperious treatment of her; keeping up her own dignity at the same time by stately speeches.

"Since no answer that I can plan will satisfy you, here is the pen, and write yourself what you please. If it is your pleasure to tell Mrs. Smyth you are dead, you are at perfect liberty to do so."

She then left the room.

"Upon my word I give mamma great credit for the spirited manner in which she has spoken to you, Alicia," said Maria. "She might have used disparaging epithets in reference to that doctor, but the notice you took of it is quite unaccountable—"

Miss Neville interrupted her.

"You need not trouble yourself to account for my conduct on any occasion; I hope it will never be unworthy of me. I do not choose to have any physician that I employ spoken of in such terms. Letty Cope, bring me that writing-desk and a little table."

Miss Cope obeyed, and Miss Neville wrote a few lines, saying she was better. Shortly after, Miss Cope left the room. Miss Neville, a little uneasy at the interpretation her sister might put on her outbreak, when she found they were alone, said:—

"Nothing so natural as that either of us, who have conversed with Dr. Campbell, and know what he is, should be surprised at the manner in which mamma spoke of him in her note. She knows nothing about him, she is always in the garden when he is here. She fancies he is little better than the generality of country practitioners. I am surprised he ever came to such an obscure place as this: he would make his fortune in London."

"He is not unlikely to make it here," said Maria, drily.

Miss Neville, not appearing to hear her sister's words, hurried on:—

"I was mentioning to Letty Cope his opinion about what a woman's relative position with regard to her husband should be, and she vowed that he embodied her *beau-ideal* of conjugal felicity, and now you know Cope—"

"I know one thing, and so do you," interrupted Maria, "and that is, that Cope, as you call her, just says whatever she thinks will please you the most, and I am sorry to find

she has discovered what *will* please you, on this occasion. It is also quite a new thing to hear you quote Miss Cope's authority in support of any of your predilections; and finally, I cannot but wonder at the entire revolution that has taken place in your sentiments; you have often spoken with great abhorrence of a woman being made a complete cipher by her husband, of her always lying eclipsed under his shadow, and how she should endeavour to maintain a certain dignified position of her own, and such fine things, in which I partly agreed with you, and to which I still hold: but now that this man preaches a contrary doctrine, and would have the wife's identity totally absorbed in the husband's, you have suddenly discovered that such a state is the only one in which true bliss is to be found. What all this will lead to, I am sure I cannot tell; you are your own mistress of course—"

"I should think I am!" broke in Miss Neville, impetuously; "in fact I know it so well, that it would be perfectly idle of you to waste any more of your breath in seeking to persuade me of it. After so long a speech, it may be a relief to you to be spared the peroration. Be good enough to call Digby."

The waiting-woman arrived, and assisted Miss Neville to her apartment; she was then ordered to withdraw, after which the high-spirited, insolent heiress threw herself on the bed, and fell into an agony of weeping, from which she did not recover for an hour.

The next morning Miss Neville remained on the sofa, taking care not to go near the window. Dr. Campbell arrived punctual to his usual time, and was perfectly attentive in his inquiries and directions, but he was dull and absent. In fact he was completely miserable.

Things had gone on very unpleasantly the day he dined at the Vicarage. Mr. Davenport had lately bought a handsome young horse, which he was training to draw his

gig, and he prided himself very much on his skill in that art, and boasted to Campbell at dinner that he had made the animal perfectly docile, and that it was fit to draw the most timid lady. He then invited his wife to go out with him in a day or two to admire how beautifully it stepped, which she consented to do, to Campbell's great displeasure. He said the horse was by no means to be trusted so soon, that a fright might do her considerable injury, and that her pony phaeton was the best thing for her at present. On this Davenport got excited, and named several ladies who made no fuss about themselves on particular occasions, and yet got on perfectly well; he declared Amelia was grown the greatest coward in the country, and that Campbell was encouraging instead of checking her.

Mrs. Davenport's pride was roused on this, and she protested she would go, asserting at the same time that she was as far as any one from wishing to make an unnecessary rout about herself; and Campbell left the house, persuaded she would be killed between the wild horse and the wild man. So he sat gloomily in the Sunville drawing-room, this being the day Davenport had fixed on for taking his wife out in the gig. He did not like to run away the moment his professional duties were over, but he said scarcely anything. Miss Neville wondered what could be the meaning of his dejection; might she be in any way the cause of it? But how could she? it was nonsense to fancy it; her foot was getting better, and that was all connected with her in which he could possibly take any interest. She thought he would have inquired how she was getting on with the two books he had suggested for her perusal, but on the contrary when she spoke of them herself he had forgotten all about them. This annoyed her immensely, and she said, testily :—

"I think I had better stop reading those books."

"Certainly, if they do not excite any interest in you," was the answer.

Another dead pause, which was broken by him.

"Perhaps you prefer sitting in the window, and looking out over your own broad lands; there is no doubt much pleasure in such a contemplation."

"It is no pleasure at all to me," she answered, "to feel conscious that I am mistress of the acres that lie before me; the truth is, happiness is free and unbought, and lies open to everyone; it consists in the exercise of the affections."

"Oh, of course," replied he, "there lies its true centre, but—" he stopped, and fell back into a melancholy silence.

She kept her imperial blue eye fastened on him, determined that he should finish his sentence.

He was too polite not to gratify her wish.

"You have had no experience of the miseries of poverty, but your own good sense must tell you that in this proud, ruthless world, the want of what you affect to despise often prevents people from being able to gratify the holiest wishes of the soul."

"I understand you," said she; "the want of means often prevents people from meeting, who seem made for one another. But another thing I know too;—money cannot procure all that poverty can drive away; and we may be very wretched, though possessed of boundless wealth."

"Undoubtedly," answered he; "when I name riches as an occasional step towards attaining a great happiness, I give them all the power they deserve to possess;—too much even that,—yet what is it compared to the might, the majesty with which the world invests gold? the world deifies it." He sighed, thinking how blandly Mr. Warner would have welcomed him if he had been able to come forward with a settlement of a thousand a year on Amelia.

Miss Neville gazed on him, wondering what was going on in his mind.

Many men, fashionable, accomplished, handsome, had passed in review before her, soliciting her favour in vain; and now this man, by no effort on his part, and in so brief a period of time, had fascinated her—enthralled her; she knew not why—it mattered not how—it was done;—that was all she knew.

We may destroy any compound substance in nature by analysing it, and scattering its component parts to all the winds of heaven, but a passion we cannot destroy by any process of the strictest analysis,—there it burns—the wonder of ourselves perhaps as much as it is the wonder of others; there is no use in taking it to pieces and detecting its absurdity, and seeking within ourselves by what mandate of reason, or pride, or prudence, we shall expel it from our souls—it will not depart.

She looked at him;—he had won her heart;—by no arts that he himself had used, certainly, but one thing was certain;—she could not be happy without him. She wished to probe him, and discover what state his mind was in; but Miss Cope, the only other person in the room, must be got rid of first.

She turned to Campbell.

"Did you not say the other day that you were very fond of pansies? I can give you a few beautiful specimens;—dear Letty Cope, do go to the farthest end of the uppermost kitchen-garden, and you will find them growing there quite neglected, but very beautiful; pull them all and bring them."

"With the greatest pleasure," said Miss Cope, delighted to be called "dear Letty."

Campbell was shocked.

"Miss Cope, I cannot possibly permit you to take such trouble for me."

But she darted off, saying:—

"A little run of this kind does me the greatest good."

Miss Neville called after her:—"Now do not run and give yourself a palpitation, my good Cope!"

Campbell was provoked: he wanted to go to the Vicarage and make one effort more to prevent Milly from going out with the young horse; he was certain mischief would befall her; still it was early, and he hoped he might yet be in time, so he sat down patiently to wait for his pansies. He happened to look at Miss Neville, and was struck by her paleness.

"I hope you are not in pain," said he.

"Oh, no; I am quite comfortable. What a pity it is Fortune is so capricious in her gifts! She has given me this estate, and I am not much the happier for it; whereas if she had given it to you it might have conduced in some way to your enjoyment;—did not you say something of the kind?"

"Less than this property would have made me happy long ago; it is too late now."

Her heart sank within her; he seemed to be a disappointed man—was not thinking much of her. But she strove to smile as she said:—

"You are too young to say that the good things of this life have lost their charm for you; would not you like to be independent of your fatiguing, trying profession?"

"I disliked it greatly at first, but now I am satisfied with it; it keeps my mind employed."

"But I should think," said she, "that the pursuits of pure literature would be more congenial to your taste than a vocation which such a mind as yours must often find offensive, nay repulsive."

"An active profession where you must be 'up and doing,'" answered he, "drives away individual sorrows,

while solitary study encourages them. The meanest, most aged, hideous woman with all her senile ailments coming to me for advice keeps my mind from preying on itself more securely than if I was seated, as I have been, under the shade of the chesnut-trees on the banks of the Cephisus, dreaming of Naiads and Dryads, and all the gods of Hellas:—or than if I were to be alone in a library poring over the deeds of past heroes moving like the figures in a camera obscura over the passive mind, which, being passive, will still have a tendency to revert to the great object of interest—self. In my youth I thought it the most dignified, exalting employment on earth to read of worlds won by a Cæsar or an Alexander; but now the man who wins his own little path in life, steep, rugged, and narrow though it be, seems to me to be better fulfilling the behest of his Maker, and to be employed in a more sublime manner, than those who spend their time in lofty sympathies with the past. My profession appears to you mean and revolting:—it may be so in many of its details, but in its wide character it is a noble one. However, neither does its mean side depress me, nor its nobler aspect elevate me; for I condense all specific ideas into the one grand one which is the support of my soul,—namely, that I am doing the work that is appointed for me to do."

His theme animated him so that he forgot for a moment the uneasiness which was depressing him, and his face beamed with all the radiance of which it was now capable. She looked at him with astonishment. She had thought that face too fine to admit of any further improvement, but now something celestial appeared to dance about his forehead, and to illuminate his eye. Was he a god then? Oh, that he was! oh, that he would vanish away into his own heavens, and leave to her that earth which till now she had so much enjoyed!

That she might, with unoccupied heart, once more play with the sunshine, revel in the storm, pluck the flowers beneath her feet, laugh away the clouds over her head, extract sweet from bitter, and evolve harmonies from apparent discord, and fancy in her wild mirth that this serious, suffering world was only a panorama moving before her for her especial delight and recreation!

But he was not a god, he was only a man, and so the more dangerous;—a being like herself, with human passions, human charms, human affinities, and human weaknesses, too;—walking this earth like herself and doomed to cross her path and be to her a source of endless bliss or endless misery, according as she should be able or not to link her existence with his, to grow to him as the lichen to the rock; to draw her soul's sustenance from him, as the ivy derives all its glory from the support of the mighty oak.

"Your sentiments are noble and independent," said she, "but under all there seems a wish to fly from yourself; surely that is not a healthy state."

He cast a look on her as much as to say,—"What right have you to catechise me in this manner?" but knowing that she was spoiled by the world, and scarcely conscious herself perhaps that she was taking undue liberties, he answered civilly:—

"You who have been so blessed by nature and fortune have little idea of the condition of those who can say with truth, 'The ploughers have ploughed upon my back, and made long furrows.' But I do not repine at my lot; I am quite satisfied to pass the rest of my life at Northwood following my profession."

"As to what you said about my being blessed by fortune," said she, "I can assure you the gifts of fortune are only so far a blessing to me as I can impart a share

to those who, being equally deserving as myself, are unaccountably overlooked by that fickle goddess."

She had endeavoured to throw a touch of careless playfulness into her last words, for she felt half shocked at having gone so far. But he answered very simply:—

"The power of performing acts of benevolence is indeed a possession which I often envy people of property. In my daily duties I frequently see an immensity of misery that I cannot relieve; this is a great trial."

Pooh! that would never do: Proteus was becoming a river and slipping out of her hands. She said impatiently:—

"So you would rather toil for ever, than have an independence and be able to live where you pleased, and to do as you liked!"

"Well, really," exclaimed he, provoked at last, "I don't think I said exactly that; in fact I have never settled in my mind whether I would prefer a life of toil or one of affluent ease, knowing that the latter I can never have."

"'Can never have!'" she repeated, while a slight glance shot from her eye to his, on which most men would have put a highly favourable interpretation.

How he read it we do not undertake to tell, our business is only with his actions at present, and his action at that instant was to spring to his feet. Neither are we prepared to say whether she thought that rapid movement was to be the precursor of one of the humblest of all attitudes, even one similar to that of the author of the 'Decline and Fall,' at which they had been laughing two days before.

Our hero did not leave it long doubtful as to what he meant by rising.

"I fear I must be very ungallant."

"'Ungallant!'"

Good heavens! so the whole affair was going to end with this heartless, frigid, hackneyed word.

"What do you mean?" she said, as composedly as she could, while her heart beat *so* violently,—surely that practised ear must have heard it.

"After giving Miss Cope the trouble of going for the pansies I do not think I shall be able to wait for them; I am anxious to see another patient before two o'clock," he answered.

Well, it was to Miss Cope that he was to be "ungallant;" that was some comfort.

"Indeed!" said she. "I suppose she is one of those aged wrinkled women who steal you from yourself."

"No, Miss Neville," he replied, in a tone that ought not to have gratified her; "the patient in this instance is young and beautiful."

"Oh! in that case neither Miss Cope nor I would wish to detain you a single instant."

He answered:—

"I have never been accused of permitting the claims of beauty—or wealth—to obtain an undue preponderance with me. In my walks through the chambers of suffering I meet with a great variety of persons; my object is to do justice to all. If you have any more questions to ask, Miss Neville, respecting your health, I will not leave the house until you are perfectly satisfied."

She bowed her head. "I am satisfied."

At this juncture Miss Cope ran in, out of breath. She found Campbell with his hat in his hand looking for his gloves.

"I do not wonder you were tired waiting," she cried; "I was an age before I could find the place where they were."

She presented him with the pansies, and he received them with one of his sweetest smiles.

"I should have made it a point to wait only I am very anxious to see Mrs. Davenport before she goes out to drive."

So then Mrs. Davenport was the "young beautiful patient;"—at least she was married—no rival there. He was now going away and she understood him less, and was on much less friendly terms with him than when he came. A feeling of resentment and despair rushed through her breast. She turned quickly to him and said, "I don't think it necessary for you to come here any more; my foot is quite well."

So saying, she kicked into the middle of the floor, with her sound foot, the hassock on which her disabled foot was resting.

"Miss Neville!" cried Campbell, astonished, and he ran to take up the hassock, and meeting Miss Cope, who had darted forward with the same object, he handed it to her, and requested of her to replace it under Miss Neville's foot.

The heiress, having vented herself, became quieter, and did not prevent Miss Cope from obeying Campbell's orders, complaining, however, how awkwardly she was settling her hassock. But Campbell did not go to arrange it himself, but gave Miss Cope a few directions from his post near the door. When the lady was composed, he approached her.

"Good morning: do you wish me to come to see you again?"

"Just as you like yourself."

"Pardon me; it is to be just as *you* like; you desired me, a moment ago, to come no more; I beg to know whether you are still of the same mind."

"Is my foot well enough to do without any more visits?"

"I do not think it is, but there is a surgeon who lives

as near you as I do, on the other side of the country; he is quite competent should you wish to dismiss me."

He spoke coldly and calmly, with that mocking humility which is so cutting to persons when they have reason to suspect that the scorn of scorns lies lurking beneath it. Her heart was bursting; it required a most violent effort to restrain her tears. He stood patiently before her, like a servant who is waiting to learn whether he is to be discharged or not—and she was wishing to make him the emperor of herself and all her possessions.

"Do you wish to hand me over to another surgeon?" she asked.

"No; I prefer completing a cure that I have commenced. It is a reflection on a medical attendant to be exchanged for another in the middle of an illness."

Oh, how stiffly, how frigidly he spoke! He cared not —not he—if he were never to see her or attend her again; he only wished to preserve his medical reputation intact. She had justly provoked him by her causeless, or at least unwarranted outbreak—but still——

She inclined her head slightly; she could not articulate a word.

He turned away.

"We shall see you in a day or two," whispered Miss Cope, who had been attending in silence to the dialogue.

"Yes," said he, shaking hands with her.

He then left the house. When he was gone Miss Neville leant her head on her hand, and her eyes assumed a stony expression, which was a very bad sign with her.

"How rigidly and obstinately professional he is!" she murmured.

"And I should be very glad to know what else he ought to be," said a voice near her.

She looked up and saw her sister, who had just come into the room unobserved.

"I was not talking to you. I did not know you were there."

"For all that, I may observe that I think it a great advantage in Dr. Campbell that he is so backward and unassuming—if people don't spoil him."

"Yes," replied Miss Neville, "the footman and the 'dispensary doctor' seem to know their places very well; we are fortunate in our servants. Letty Cope, will you help me up-stairs."

They went away, and in a little time Miss Cope returned.

"What have you done with her?" asked Maria.

"I settled her on the bed; she is very uneasy," answered the other.

"How? with her foot?"

"No; in her mind."

"Has she anything to amuse her?"

"No; she would not accept of anything; I offered to bring her either of those books she has lately commenced, and she desired me to burn them both."

"To burn them both?"

"Yes, indeed, but of course I did not."

"I should hope you did not! particularly as they belong to me. Did that man affront her in any way?"

"I don't know; when he first came he said hardly a word; then she sent me to get pansies for him, and I don't know what happened when I was out; by what you heard her say, she seems to think him too distant."

"To tell you the truth, that is what I suspect; this is a bad business, Letty."

Miss Cope shook her head, and Maria, with an aching heart, sat down to read 'The Pleasures of the Imagination.'

Campbell, without once pulling in his bridle, rode in a gallop to the Vicarage. He thundered at the door. The servant opened it and said, in answer to his inquiry—

"They went out ten minutes ago, sir, in their gig."

"With the new horse?"

"Oh yes, sir; and master dashed through the gate in magnificent style."

"I don't doubt it," thought Campbell. "Oh Milly! if that troublesome, capricious, young woman had not kicked away her hassock, for no imaginable reason, I should have been here in time to make one effort more to save you! may Heaven protect one of its angels!"

He returned sadly to his cottage.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ANTHONY, THE MONK.

"When the Lord of the Hill, Amundeville,
Made Norman church his prey,
And expell'd the friars, one friar still
Would not be driven away;
And whether for good, or whether for ill,
It is not mine to say;
But still with the house of Amundeville
He abideth night and day."

BYRON.

"Intra quoque viscera saxum est."

OVID.

MEANTIME affairs were not going on much more comfortably at Northwood Abbey than at Sunville. It was now the beginning of June, and the place which had looked so damp, and gloomy, and lifeless, when the family arrived in February, was now in all its magnificence of verdure and foliage, and rang with the songs of a thousand birds. The extensive flat lawn, that stretched before the front-door of the mansion, displayed myriads of gorgeous buttercups and daisies flashing through the rich grass, and over these gay and transient smilers towered the great aborigines—the ancestral oaks, and limes, and elms, in their newly-donned robes of vivid, airy verdure of every tint, so delicious to the eye, so enlivening to the fancy, and so much dearer to the admirer of nature than the deep, dark, ponderous shroud of sap-green, which, with

scarcely any perceptible difference of hue, at the end of August, covers alike oak, elm, sycamore, horse-chesnut, and beech, weighing on the soul almost like a sorrow. Lady Caroline's garden was as bright as the richest flowers of the season could make it; her greenhouses and conservatories, too, were filled with rare plants from more quarters of the world than we care to name; and a beautiful little cottage *ornée* had been erected for her in a sheltered dell, a quarter of a mile from the house. Her father had placed it at this distance in order to oblige her to take a little walk before she could reach it, for, latterly, she had given up taking any kind of exercise on foot. The spot selected for the cottage was surrounded by a broad, clear rivulet, and was joined to the main-land by two rustic bridges at opposite sides of the island.

The little edifice stood in the middle of a grass garden, and consisted of a pretty porch and one apartment of a circular shape; the door and window were opposite to one another, and the arcs were divided into four panels each. This chamber was a treasury of art on a minute scale; The chairs were of light graceful workmanship, with cushions of dark green satin, set off by amber-coloured gimp and fringe; the curtains were partly of green satin, partly of a white fabric so exquisite you might have thought that a dozen brides had contributed their virgin veils to form them, for they certainly seemed worthy of decking "a wedding morning face." The panels in the arcs were furnished with busts and pictures placed alternately; the busts stood on little gilded brackets, and were of fine alabaster, representing Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, and Mrs. Hemans. The pictures were the most finished specimens of water-coloured drawings; under the busts and pictures stood four tables and four small cabinets of fine satinwood placed alternately, and amply supplied with various articles of *vertù*, which cannot be named in

detail, but among which choice specimens of china both of oriental and European manufacture were the most conspicuous. A dark round table, inlaid with lily of the valley and other flowers, stood in the middle of the room; it supported a workbox of such beauty that it seemed to have been stolen from Minerva herself. As this was designed entirely for a summer retreat, the floor had no carpet, but it was tessellated with various coloured woods, disposed in tasteful figures; the collection of books was very select, and if nothing but the binding even were taken into account, each volume formed a gem. The musical department was represented by a small beautiful seraphina.

Amidst this accumulation of the delights of life, the presiding fairy for whose enjoyment all was planned seemed restless and unhappy; in health she had nothing to complain of, and required no medical attendance, so Dr. Campbell had given up calling of late; he had not time for friendly visits, Miss Neville occupied him so much, and he thought it very fortunate Lady Caroline was off his list of patients, as the two ladies were eight miles at least asunder.

Caroline, who had heard nothing of Miss Neville and her accident, thought him very unkind for never looking in on her, and day after day she still cherished a hope that he would make his appearance; so from one o'clock until four in each afternoon she was kept up by the excitement of expecting him, but as soon as any chance of his coming was at an end she became listless and melancholy, and her father could not prevail on her to take interest in anything; immediately after breakfast every day she walked to the cottage to please the earl, as he had just spent such a sum of money in furnishing it for her, but while there, she neither touched the seraphina, nor opened the superb workbox, nor looked into one of the

gem-like volumes, but consulted her watch every five minutes, and when the time for expecting visitors arrived she returned to the lonely, stately drawing-room of the Abbey, and there sat until the approaching dinner-hour brought back the sense of sickening disappointment.

Matters were in this state when Lord Fitzarthur returned from a six weeks' visit to London. He noticed her depression with much uneasiness, and questioned her closely about her health, but she assured him she was very well, and he could not doubt it, as her tendency was to fancy herself ill when she was not so. That night after she had retired, her brother observed to the earl that she was not in a satisfactory state.

"Far from it, far from it, indeed," answered the father. "I have been suffering on her account for the last week more than I can tell, and I have made up my mind to send for Campbell to-morrow." To his utter amazement his son told him that such a step should not be taken.

"And pray why, Freddy? I should be very much obliged to you to tell me why."

"Because, sir, she is quite well; she told me so herself."

"Oh, poor lamb! she does not know whether she is ill or not; but he will find out directly."

"You want to bring him here, sir, to force her to say she is poorly; is that a way to manage fanciful persons? she should be kept from doctors as much as possible, particularly when she admits she is in health."

"I know she is not as she ought to be, and that man has such an art—" argued the earl.

"If you refer to his professional art," replied Fitzarthur, "she does not, I repeat, require it; if you refer to any art he possesses as a man, he shall not practise that art on my sister, I am resolved."

"Dear me, Freddy! you go on as if I was talking of

spells and charms; I simply mean that even if he orders her nothing, it does her all the good in the world to chat to him for half an hour."

"I am sorry to hear it, sir; I will seek for some other mode of improving her spirits. Miss Bolton has been long under an engagement to spend a little time here; has she fulfilled her promise?"

"No; we have forgotten to remind her of it since the fine weather set in."

"Then we will make arrangements with Caroline to-morrow about inviting her here for a week or two; and will you put off sending for Dr. Campbell until medical advice is required?"

The earl answered:—

"If Miss Bolton's company cheers her, it may not be necessary; Campbell certainly does wonders with scarcely any medicine; it is not strange that I should be partial to his system."

Fitzarthur said nothing, but he doubted within himself whether Campbell's "wonders" and "system," were such as fathers of Lord Northwood's rank ought to be "partial to;" if he gave scarcely any medicines, on the other hand his poisons seemed to be acting pretty powerfully; and while Fitzarthur hesitated to set down that he was administering them wilfully, he resolved to have him as little as possible at the Abbey, and he felt great satisfaction at hearing his father complain, while he was lighting his candle, that Campbell hardly ever made a friendly call, although he had been treated with much kindness and affability.

So Lord Fitzarthur had undertaken to minister to a diseased mind, and to pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow. It was to be done, too, chiefly through the instrumentality of a *lady*. If any one had asked him to take Cronstadt with a few boats and a handful of men, he

would have simply thought him mad, but the task he had laid out for himself was full as impracticable and hopeless. Another individual could do it certainly by a very common question, in four words, but that individual was neither a brother nor a woman.

The next morning Lord Fitzarthur was happy to find his sister received with much pleasure the proposal of inviting Miss Bolton to the Abbey. So the moment breakfast was over he made her write a note, and expressed his intention of delivering it to her himself, that he might overrule any objection she was likely to make.

Sarah was greatly surprised and flattered at seeing Lord Fitzarthur arriving in person with an invitation to her from his sister. If she had known the motive of his great anxiety for the visit, her satisfaction would of course have been much lessened; the "prudent god" who has wrapped the future in duskiest night has with equal benignity concealed from us the motives which underlie many of the actions of our friends, leaving us to give our own agreeable interpretation to them.

Sarah readily accepted the invitation; her father was pretty well now, and constantly out; her brothers and Lucy would be more watchful than ever while she was absent, and Mrs. Miller was quite competent to manage the household affairs for a short time. So the next day Lord Fitzarthur sent the carriage for her. Lady Caroline received her gladly and affectionately, but Sarah remarked that she looked pale and anxious, and that talking seemed rather an effort to her. Lord Fitzarthur not only endeavoured to make up for her deficiencies, but with nice tact, chose such subjects of conversation as he knew would suit his sister's tastes and capacity, and he thus sought by degrees to lead her to take some interest in their discussions. He dedicated two hours every day after breakfast to the ladies; they all walked to the cottage together,

where he read to them, and solicited their remarks on whatever work he had selected for their improvement. Poor Caroline strove to appear pleased and interested; Sarah was really delighted; never since her mother's death had she enjoyed anything so much as these literary recreations in this delightful, quiet, refined retreat. Lord Fitzarthur was so mild, so intelligent, so anxious to draw out his listeners, and to improve them by his superior knowledge, that he cultivated their minds without letting them feel their deficiencies; and he was pleased to note the quickness of their perception, the delicacy of their observations, and the just conclusions they came to without any process of reasoning. Although we have used the plural pronoun, Sarah was at present the only one of the two who could be said to display any of the above qualities, for Caroline, never very partial to literary pursuits, could not now muster spirits to do more than listen to her brother and her friend. But to Sarah, as we have said, this was a time of unalloyed pleasure; now she felt in her proper place; surrounded by art and elegance and literature, with a charming companion, who, while he showed the greatest deference for her opinions, was in a thousand indirect ways increasing her knowledge, correcting her judgment, and guiding her taste. What a paradise it was, compared to sitting in her own parlour, worried and disgusted by the ridiculous Quill! she felt it almost incredible that the same world could turn up two phases of one life with so diametrically opposite a character from one another. Lord Fitzarthur, who had often been depressed by the apathy of his sister, was on his side delighted with the intelligence and good sense of Sarah, and the animation and readiness with which she entered into all hi sviews and opinions.

After the cottage lectures were over they separated for some hours; Fitzarthur went away on whatever daily business he had to do; and the two ladies amused them-

selves as best they could. They played on the piano, or did some fancy work, or looked over books of engravings, of which there was an abundant supply in the drawing-room. The earl did not trouble them during the day; he was happy to have his daughter in such good hands, and gave up his time to his schemes of improvement, some of which he was beginning to carry into effect. Lady Caroline seemed rather relieved when her brother left them; she was glad to have the reading over, and she ventured to speak a little of Dr. Campbell to Sarah, never mentioning him in the presence of Fitzarthur. Sarah told her of Miss Neville's accident, and how much he was taken up attending her. This was a relief; there was some cause for his apparent neglect; he would renew his visits when this engagement was over. Sarah inquired about her pets, her lambs, her bullfinch, and so forth; but she seemed to have forgotten them all; and as to the parrot and the bullfinch,—if they had spent the whole day in a social interchange of accomplishments it would not have given her the least concern. The servants, too, appeared to have a much easier time than before; she never complained of their negligence, or their idleness, or the difficulties they raised about the discharge of their duty; she took no notice of anything; she was a totally different person from what she was the first day that Sarah saw her,—that unforgotten day when they visited Miss Purdon's grave, and conversed with the Indian. Sarah was grieved at this change, the cause of which she was at no loss to divine, but the only notice she took of it was to strive to amuse her friend as much as possible. Caroline found great comfort in her, although she did not admit her to her deepest confidence; she was too proud and too delicate to reveal to any one, however intimate, her attachment to one who had never shown any partiality to her.

The room that Sarah slept in was the same in which

the fire had occurred the night the family first arrived. It had been refitted and set apart for visitors. Lady Caroline slept in another part of the house. Sarah had a full view of the Abbey from her window, and at the present season it looked very beautiful. The ivy, gorgeous with its new leaves of bright and glossy green, streamed in sheets, or lay massed in piles all about the old grey stone walls to which its grasp seemed to add firmness. She felt ashamed of the suggestion she had made to George that all this ivy should be torn away from the relics it so grandly embellished, merely to render the surrounding atmosphere less damp; she began to think she was too opinionated—too ready to sacrifice the beautiful to the useful. She wished to visit the interior of the Abbey, and examine everything in it worth seeing; and thinking that it would amuse Caroline to conduct her through it, she proposed one day, after returning from the cottage, that they should inspect together this ancient abode of worn-out superstition.

"With pleasure," answered Caroline, "although there is not much remaining now but the external walls; however, there is one thing worth seeing, and that I will show you; I am surprised I did not think of it before."

They crossed the yard and went out at a door which brought them directly under the walls of the Abbey. The trees about it were chiefly fir, and were dark and gloomy; the grass was long and poor, for the sunshine reached it but in partial stripes wherever a slight opening in the trees admitted an occasional ray. Large stones lay about entangled in the imperfect vegetation, and there was something sombre and ominous in the aspect of the whole which would have been oppressive to the spirits but for the pleasant air of summer that was breathing around,—the occasional note of thrush calling to thrush,

and the glimpses of the bright landscape beyond, bathed in the sunshine.

They entered the Abbey and found themselves in a spacious area, the various partitions of which had been long overthrown. The great window in the eastern gable was still entire. Its strong, simple mullions did not ramify into the rich tracery that belonged to a later period of architecture, but shot up severe and solid against the external sky, this end of the pile being free from over-arching foliage. Sarah admired it greatly; it pleased her more than the elaborate workmanship she had seen in the windows of some cathedrals of a more modern date.

"This was the refectory, my brother thinks," said Caroline, showing a compartment, the partition wall of which was not quite destroyed. "Many a carousal was held here which would have given great room for scandal, but that those sly monks were dexterous in concealing their little irregularities. Come over with me to the other side of the Abbey."

She conducted Sarah across the uneven ground, rough with many a stone that had fallen from time to time, and was concealed by the rank grass. When they had reached the north side, she said:—

"Here is a row of half-broken doorways which I have reason to think were the entrances into the cells where the monks slept. This one at the upper end is the least imperfect, let us go in."

They entered through the doorway that she indicated, into a very small chamber. Caroline approached a low narrow niche sunk in the wall like a berth in a ship's cabin.

"The ivy is coming in here, too," said she, pushing aside some leaves; "look in."

Sarah did so, and saw in the rude bed a recumbent

figure of stone lightly and even elegantly formed; the features were fine and regular, with an expression nearly feminine in its beauty. It was naked with the exception of a little drapery round the waist.

"I should not have expected such a pretty statue as that in this empty and dilapidated place," said Sarah; "I am surprised it was suffered to remain so long."

"Much gold would not bribe any one in the neighbourhood to remove this," said Caroline, looking mysterious. "There is a terrible legend connected with it; did you ever hear of Brother Anthony, who was one of the monks in this Abbey a long time before the destruction of the monasteries?"

"Yes; I have heard some vague stories connected with his name."

"Well, this is he," said Caroline, in a low voice.

"An image of him, you mean," said Sarah.

"Oh no," replied Caroline, shaking her head; "it is *himself!*"

"What do you mean?" asked Sarah, smiling.

"I do not say I believe it," answered Caroline, "but the story is, that here in this bed where he lay he was turned to stone in an instant as a punishment for an awful crime."

"And what was the crime?"

"I will tell you. Have you heard of Castle Garde-le-Roi, about five miles from this Abbey on the road to the north?"

"I have."

"It is almost a ruin now; papa took me there one day, and, such as it is, it is to me a very interesting spot, having been the abode of my ancestors previous to their receiving these Abbey lands in a gift from King Henry VIII. Towards the end of the civil wars of the Roses that castle was inhabited by a brave knight

named Sir Richard Fitzarthur. Before his time the castle was called 'Arthur's Keep,' or some stern name of that kind, but he changed it to 'Garde-le-Roi' on this account. He was a staunch supporter of King Henry VI. both on principle, and because he had the honour of being akin to him, for a granddaughter of John of Gaunt had married the then heir of the Fitz-arthurs. Sir Richard moreover thought it a shame to disturb the reigning monarch; he was the third in succession who had possessed the throne, and his father had shed such glory upon the annals of England."

"And so you are descended from the Plantagenets!" interrupted Sarah.

"Yes, in the manner in which I have mentioned," answered Caroline, with a look of satisfaction; but her countenance immediately fell as she added:—

"But how does a noble line of ancestors contribute to our happiness? that depends on the manner in which it pleases Providence to shape the circumstances of our individual life. Oh! I often wish that I was more humbly born. However, to go on with my story. When poor King Henry was journeying from Wales, to join an insurrection of his adherents in the north of England, in his progress he spent one night at the castle of Sir Richard. The country was in a dreadful state, all occupied by Yorkists; the king was not safe anywhere, but his kinsman guarded him nobly while he was under his roof; the countersign for the night was 'Garde le Roi;' none but those who spoke it could pass the drawbridge, and ever since that memorable day Sir Richard called his castle 'Garde le Roi.' This loyal knight had, like papa, one son and one daughter; the latter was very beautiful and sought in marriage by some of the great nobles of the land, but she rejected them all, and fixed her affections on a young man of obscure birth but

very handsome and accomplished, and called Anthony Beauclerc, because, like Henry I., he excelled all his fellows in learning. He loved her ardently, too, but could not dare to offer himself as her suitor. When Sir Richard discovered that it was his daughter's attachment to Anthony Beauclerc that was the cause of her refusing so many splendid offers, his rage knew no bounds, and he promised Anthony's father, who was indigent, a large sum of money if he would contrive to make his son take the monastic vow. However it was effected, it certainly took place, and Anthony became a monk in this Abbey. Notwithstanding the destruction of her hopes in this quarter, Adela, for that was her name, continued sullen and impracticable, and would not listen to any other lover. At length, one morning, she disappeared. Her hat, veil, and girdle were found on the edge of a lake adjoining the castle, now dried up. Along with them was a small scroll indicating that she had drowned herself. Writing was a rare accomplishment among ladies in those days, but we may presume Anthony had given her some instructions. This melancholy intimation was received as truth by every one, but the fact was, that she had escaped from her home in male attire, and having left the false account of her suicide beside the lake, she presented herself at this Abbey, stating that she was an orphaned friendless youth, who had no wish on earth but to become a regular of the establishment. She was accordingly admitted as a novice, under the name of Wilfred. I shudder at reciting such a dreadful story. That room you sleep in—you will not be afraid to continue to sleep there if I tell you something more about it?"

"Not the least danger of that," said Sarah, smiling.

"Well, that room, and the one under it, both belonged to a building connected with the Abbey; it was all destroyed except those two apartments. Into your room,

then, the young novice was sent one night to perform some penance, and Anthony was ordered to attend and see that it was done properly. You may imagine the guilty joy of Adela at thus finding herself alone at midnight, with the man for whom she had sacrificed the whole world, for whose sake she was content to be numbered among the dead by her father, her mother, and her brother. She was not long in discovering herself. Then commenced the career of sin that I must not dwell on. This lasted six months. At the end of that time it happened one night, when all were at rest, that a thunderstorm gathered and broke with great force almost directly over the Abbey. One of the monks, named Cuthbert, was greatly afraid of thunder, and had never the courage to remain alone during such a visitation. On this occasion, he left his bed terrified after a few claps, and sought Anthony, who was a favourite with all—he was so cool and sensible. Into Anthony's cell then rushed the timid Cuthbert, but another person, more timid I suppose, had arrived before him. Certain it is that Cuthbert, on approaching the bed to waken Anthony and receive from him some words of comfort, found that he was not alone in this narrow couch. The person who shared it, on hearing an intruder coming near, instinctively sprang up, and at the same instant a bright flash of lightning illuminated the cell, revealing to the astounded monk the features of Wilfred the novice—alas! no longer Wilfred the novice, but a beautiful woman, with her breast and shoulders quite bare. Cuthbert uttered a cry of horror, which brought the Abbot himself and some of his subordinates into the room with lights. They lifted the wretched young woman from the floor, on which she had fallen, and when they looked into the nook, beside which we now stand, they found that the same flash of lightning that had disclosed to Cuthbert the beauty and the sex of this unworthy scion of

our race had struck upon her guilty paramour and turned him to stone! Exactly as you see him now—as he was transfixed on that terrible night—so has he remained for four hundred years, unmoved from the spot, unchanged by time, and in the very attitude in which I cannot say death, but petrifaction took him."

She paused, looking pale, agitated, and fatigued.

"I am sorry, Caroline," said Sarah, "that you give so much of your attention to these gloomy, wild, supernatural stories."

"Our family legends interest me more, now, than anything else," answered she; "and I assure you it is all true relative to the loves of the Lady Adela and the monk Anthony; as to his transformation into stone, all the old people here devoutly believe it. My story will soon be finished. When the Abbot saw that Heaven had taken the punishment of Anthony into its own hands he crossed himself and said a prayer, after which he and the prior took Adela in their arms and carried her off. The awe-struck monks saw them bear her into the room under that in which you sleep. How long they remained there I cannot tell, but when they came out of it their arms were empty of their burden, and none dare ask them how they disposed of her, but never more was she seen on this earth."

"Do you think they buried her alive?" asked Sarah.

Caroline answered:—

"That is the punishment for a nun who has broken her vow; now she was a novice and had not taken any vow, either as man or woman; but then, she tempted Anthony, and caused him to break his, which was an awful offence; probably it was optional with the Abbot what punishment he should inflict. I think they may have put her to death and then buried her under the pavement of that apartment."

"And which of the rooms is called 'The Monk's room'?" inquired Sarah.

"That which you sleep in; it was there she made herself known to him, and they say that for a long time after the catastrophe his ghost was seen there at intervals searching for her. You don't mind these things?"

"No, truly; particularly as I suppose the ghost is laid by this time," said Sarah, laughing. "But who told you this curious story?"

"I learned a good deal of it from a very old woman, who came one day with his dinner to her grandson, who was clearing away some of the stones that were obstructing the passage into the Abbey; I found her resting near the entrance into this cell, and I asked her a few questions, and by degrees she told me most of this history; and I learned the rest in an ancient folio in the library, called 'The Antiquities of the House of Northwood;' I never thought of opening it until her story awakened my curiosity: there I saw an engraving of the horned hat, that Adela left on the edge of the lake; an outlandish-looking thing it appears to us now,—I must show it to you; poor Adela's was kept in the family for two hundred years. But my story would not be complete if I did not tell you that there is a tradition, that when Anthony's soul is released from purgatory, this stone figure, whatever it is, will disappear from this niche where it has been so long lying."

"His soul has been an unconscionably long time in purgatory," said Sarah, laughing.

"I will tell you when it is to be set free," said Caroline, looking mysterious and confidential. "When the sin of Adela has been in some measure expiated by a great suffering on the part of a female descendant of the House of Fitzarthur. Now my brother and I are papa's only son and daughter, as Adela and her brother were to Sir

Richard, and I sometimes think I may be the descendant fated to wash away the stain, and to deliver the monk."

"Pardon me," cried Sarah, seeing how very pale she had become, "but I must say it is very enervating to your mind to dwell so much on these superstitious tales; and you know that one poor sinful being cannot expiate the transgression of another; and as to purgatory,—since there is no such place, the monk's soul cannot be there. Instead of brooding over these superstitious fables, I would advise you to attend with more interest to that history of Leo the Tenth that your brother is reading to you, and remember that Adela and Anthony have a firmer Rock to depend on than could be supplied to them by you, or any other mortal." She paused for a moment, and then resumed: "Is your father descended in a straight line from Sir Richard Fitzarthur?"

"Yes: Sir Richard's only son was great-grandfather to Sir Simon, to whom Henry VIII. granted these lands; and when the monks were departing they cautioned Sir Simon not to remove this figure, for that it was fixed here as a standing monument of God's vengeance on sinners."

"Well, let us speak no more of it," said Sarah, "but be thankful that we live in the days of light and reason."

Thinking it probable she would never visit the cell again, Sarah, before going away, gave another look at the statue, which she could not help acknowledging to herself had something very attractive about it.

"Does it remind you of any one?" said Caroline.

Sarah gazed at it again. She noticed that the features, cast in the most refined mould of manly beauty, breathed a soft, feminine expression, which combination has a seductive power over the hearts of women which is almost irresistible. This was precisely the form of beauty that Dr. Campbell possessed; but yet they were not like;

Campbell had a Grecian outline of features; the monk was a handsome Saxon.

"It certainly does remind me of a gentleman we know," said Sarah; "yet there is no facial resemblance; the similarity consists in a certain power each has over the mind."

"Precisely so!" cried Caroline; "the living one—he who is not yet turned to stone" (she strove to speak playfully), "resides not far off; nearer to you than to us."

"Too near to you as it is," thought Sarah;—neither of them uttered his name.

They came out of the cell, and, before they left the Abbey, Sarah took another survey of the eastern window. On looking in that direction, she was surprised to see in the angle formed by the gable and the side wall, a young female, motionless and cowering, evidently anxious to escape the notice of the ladies. Her complexion was dark, and she was dressed with a tasteful contrast of colours which Englishwomen of a higher rank than hers (for she seemed only an upper servant) seldom display.

Sarah, wishing to raise Caroline's spirits by a little jest, said: "Perhaps that figure over there is the Lady Adela, turned to stone." Caroline looked quickly towards the spot, and immediately called out rather angrily:—

"Sabina! Sabina!" The young girl came forward looking confused.

"Please my lady——" Caroline interrupted her.

"What business have you to come sauntering about the Abbey at this time of the day, when you have so much to do in the house?"

"I had a great headache, my lady, and I went to the garden in hopes it would get better, and also to gather a bouquet for your ladyship's dressing-table, and the gardener asked me to look him out a big stone to put under the hot-bed frame, to prop it up, and let in some

cool air,—and I was searching for one here—there be so many."

She spoke fluently enough, but with a foreign accent; her features had an Italian cast, and she was pretty; but there was a dark, resolute expression in the eyes that scarcely belonged to her sex and age.

"And I suppose," said Lady Caroline, "you are to lift up the stone with those gloves on, and to carry it in that apron! Don't imagine that I believe a single word of your story. Thompson would scarcely have the impertinence to send one of my maids to gather stones for him! Go in to your needlework directly."

Sabina skipped out of the Abbey, apparently glad to get away.

"She is a foreigner, I suppose," said Sarah.

"Yes, she is a Swiss whom we got in Paris, and I find her very useful and clever in the country; she makes my under-clothing, and dresses hair really better than Elpsley; and she is an admirable confectioner, she was taught in Paris; she made those pretty little sugar toys we had at supper last night; but still, convenient as she is, I do not think I can keep her; she is grown very idle, always turning up where she should not be;—and I suspect, too, she is flirting with the gardener; positively I must get rid of her as soon as ever I can find her some other situation, bvt I cannot send her adrift in a strange land; it would be unjust and cruel. Let us come in: I hear the luncheon bell."

When they were entering the house they met Fitzarthur.

"Where have you been? I have been searching everywhere for you," said he.

Caroline replied that she was showing the Abbey to Miss Bolton.

"It is a cold, damp place, even now," observed he; "I

often beg of you, Caroline, not to spend so much time there; you seem to like it better than Sans Souci."

That was the ambitious name he had given the cottage, expecting, perhaps, that nature would work backwards, and that the name of the place might produce a certain state of mind in its mistress, as an untroubled mind might in its overflowings have originally given that name to some happy spot where care never entered.

"It was my fault," said Sarah; "I asked her to show me the Abbey, but my curiosity is satisfied, and I shall not desire to go there again."

"I am glad to hear it," said he, "for verily you both look as pale as ghosts; come to luncheon, and when you have had some refreshment I will give you a ride, for nothing renovates the spirits equal to a canter. Do you ever ride on horseback, Miss Bolton?"

"It is a long time since I did so; I fear I should make an awkward attempt now," answered Sarah.

"Do not say so; I will give you my favourite horse, which is very gentle; and as to a habit,—of course you have not got one here, but my sister will lend you one of hers."

"With pleasure," said Caroline; "that beautiful one of rifle-green that you gave me, but which I never wore."

"No; that you did not, you contumacious monkey; you may do worse than go into the Rifles for life."

"I think I was quite right," answered she; then, turning to Sarah, she said, with much *naïveté*:—

"Now, do you think a lady ought to wear a gentleman's livery (for that is what I called it), and ride on his horse in Hyde Park, if she does not mean to encourage him?"

Sarah felt remarkably awkward, for she had just consented to ride on Lord Fitzarthur's horse; she did not

know what to say, and coloured. Fitzarthur coloured a little too; but, rallying, said to his sister:—

"Come, come, you know this is a sore subject with me; Colonel Douglas was the noblest fellow on earth, and would have made the best of husbands; you will never meet his equal in this country, I promise you."

It was now Caroline's turn to blush, but just then the earl came into luncheon, and gave a new turn to the conversation.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AN AWKWARD RENCONTRE.

"Au visage sur l'heure, un rouge m'est monté
Que l'on me vît connue d'un pareil eventé."
MOLIÈRE.

WHEN luncheon was ended, the young ladies went to prepare for their ride, and Lord Fitzarthur to make arrangements about the horses. At length they were all thoroughly equipped. Sarah was a little timid at first, but by degrees she gained courage, for the horse was perfectly tractable, and Lord Fitzarthur took the greatest pains to instruct her in holding the reins and managing the animal. Lady Caroline was quite a skilful horsewoman, for she had taken lessons at the riding-school in London, and had also ridden a good deal since she came to the country. Both girls looked very well on horseback, particularly Sarah, who had a fine commanding figure, and sat her horse with dignity and ease. Lord Fitzarthur proposed that they should go into Northwood, and, as they had their choice of two roads, one by Mr. Davenport's vicarage, and the other by the Hill of Cones and Laburnum Lodge, he thought the latter preferable, as the view into the valley was so beautiful, and also that Miss Bolton might have an opportunity of taking a look at her father.

When they reached Sarah's home, Lucy came to the

door, quite elated to see her sister so mounted and so accompanied. She gave an excellent account of her papa, and, as he was out in his Bath-chair, at the farthest end of the field, Sarah did not alight, and they all pursued their way to Northwood.

They arrived at the suburbs, which consisted of a few scattered dwellings, among which appeared Dr. Campbell's lonely cottage, lying on the shady side of the road. The seasons made little difference there: the sun never shone upon it, the grass and the cypresses were always dark green, and the window-sashes were never open. The verandah drooped over the upper part of the parlour windows, like the half-closed eyelids of a dead infant. The sentinel-cypresses shot up in front like ghosts, with their deeply-indented outline, and their vesture almost sable in its intense greenness. They looked, as their master himself generally looked, impenetrable, stiff, and beautiful.

This was the home of the man who could have got Sunville, with all its wealth, for the bare asking. This was the home, into which an earl's daughter, the descendant of Edward III., would have joyfully stepped, and exchanged all her gold, her luxury, and her grandeur, for its poverty, its privations, and its meanness. As they passed by, all three (on whose minds the proprietor had taken a strong hold, though in a very different manner as regarded each), gazed earnestly on the house, but not one of them uttered a syllable. "Ha! there is our friend Dr. Campbell's cottage:" such might have been the exclamation of an idle acquaintance, but those light words would have withered ere they reached the lips of Caroline, with her fatal passion; Fitzarthur, with his gloomy forebodings; and Sarah, with her dark recollections of a past scene, and her haunting suspicions regarding what was still to come.

So they all fastened their eyes for a moment on that little dwelling; but, when they passed on, Caroline alone turned back her head to take "one look more."

They entered the town by Lower Henry-street, which, as we have mentioned in an early chapter, was at right angles with the river and the street that lay along its banks. On arriving at the bridge, Lord Fitzarthur ordered the groom in attendance to ride quickly to a saddler, who lived at the top of Upper Henry-street, to tell him to hasten with some work, that he had a long time in hand, and to rejoin him afterwards on the green. The man set off, and the party having crossed the bridge turned to their left, and proceeded slowly up the street that faced the river.

The village looked remarkably pretty now; the poplars were in full leaf, and the water made a quiet summer murmuring. The shops were cheerful and flourishing, and, in some instances, quite handsome. They gave evident tokens of the near neighbourhood of the lord of the manor, for the earl purchased everything he possibly could in the town that was built on his property.

Lord Fitzarthur surveyed the improved state of things with the greatest satisfaction, describing to Sarah the condition of such and such an establishment when their family first came, and making her notice the great change for the better that was now visible. Sarah entered cordially into his feelings on the subject.

When they arrived at the turn into the village green, Lady Caroline, who, like all persons whose minds are uneasy, found a relief in rapid motion, proposed that they should have a gallop round the level plain.

"Not to-day, my love," said her brother; "Miss Bolton is not sufficiently accustomed to horseback to venture on so bold a flight; but I think it would refresh you both if we alighted and walked up through the shrubbery to

Mr. Davenport's house, to inquire for Mrs. Davenport, who has been very ill."

"Indeed!" said Sarah; "I am sorry to hear it."

"I quite forgot to tell you before," said he; "a gentleman mentioned it to me yesterday, adding, at the same time, however, that she was better; she was injured some way by a fall from a gig, and I think it incumbent on us to call and leave our names."

Sarah concurred heartily with him, but Caroline said:—

"And what shall we do with our horses? You have sent Davis on a message."

"We shall easily find some to hold them," answered he; "see, there is a set of little fellows standing by the seat under the lime-tree; don't you think one of them will be very glad to take charge of them until we come back, if I offer him a shilling?" They proceeded towards the tree.

The tallest of the lads was standing in the middle of the group, and appeared to be haranguing the others. As they approached nearer, Sarah, to her utter dismay, discovered that he was the person whom, of all others on earth, she would least wish to meet, namely, our friend Quill. He would certainly recognise her when they alighted, and when one of the boys was asked to hold the horses. Perplexed and miserable, she began to meditate by what device she might escape the hated rencontre.

Quill looked particularly shabby to-day: it was quite too warm for his brown greatcoat now, which in winter, like charity, covered a multitude of sins; so he wore a cheap fustian shooting-jacket, which had been once green, but was ripening, like some fruits, into a reddish brown; faded blueish trowsers, somewhat too short; white stockings, which, having been a little dyed by the blacking of his shoes, had the benefit of being again a little blanched

by the dust of the roads; a rusty black stock, rather worn at the edges; and a hat, which, on the score of seniority, had a right to a salute from every other hat that it met on the queen's highway.

While Sarah, with her face averted from the tree, was puzzling how she should manage to avoid recognition, Lord Fitzarthur made a quick movement forward, and coming close to the boys, called out to Quill, whom he thought the steadiest and oldest-looking among them:—

"I say, my good fellow, will you hold these horses for about ten minutes, and I will give you a shilling."

Quill cast on him a look full of wrath and indignation.

"Your good fellow!" he cried, in his shrillest tones; "Humph! as good as you like, to be sure; but as to my being *your fellow*, or any one else's *fellow*,—I can promise you you have mistaken your man; and as to holding your horses,—I'd have you to know that when I *am* reduced to earning my bread, I will do it in some more hint-to-lick-you-all manner than by holding horses at a shilling a job."

Lord Fitzarthur was half amused and half provoked at his impudence.

"I beg your pardon, sir," answered he; "I did not immediately recognise your superiority over the persons by whom you are surrounded; I will apply to some one of less intellectual greatness than you seem to possess."

Quill, not noticing his mocking tone, answered.

"I consider it my glory, sir, to stoop occasionally to these poor creatures who have not, like me, been blessed with a liberal hedgecation, and to enlighten them, as far as I am able, on law, and religion, and politics; it is thus that we of the higher classes can render our superiority over them least envied and most useful."

"As to any nulledge we've picked it up as yit from

you," said a keen-looking fellow, the biggest of the boys near him, "we might as well be listening to Sawyer's mill down there, as makes plenty o' noise to be sure, as far as that goes; the words you use seem to be them long words in the spelling book as have no meaning put after them."

"I'm not surprised," said Quill, with a smile of triumph, "that my words staggered you a little; you can't get up to me in one stride; I'll endeavour to be more simple in future; meantime, don't forget what I have told you."

"Furget!" said the boy, "I doubt we wull furget it before to-morrow mornin'; them as have had a donkey brayin' i' their ears for half the day are like enough to think they hear him again when they lie down at night."

Quill, not approving that the party on horseback should hear any more of the observations of his pupils, was turning to go off, to the inexpressible relief of Sarah; but just then Lord Fitzarthur said to her:—

"Have you heard that dialogue? is not it capital?"

She was obliged to turn her head towards him, and forthwith Quill got a complete view of her features. He immediately exclaimed:—

"Bless me, Miss Sarah, can I believe my eyes? Is that you, mounted in such grand style?" And he ran to her and grasped her right hand, squeezing it until he pressed her whip nearly into her flesh. "How glad I am to see you! you were out the last time I called at Laburnum Lodge, so we have never met since the happy day we spent together at Holly Park."

Lord Fitzarthur and Lady Caroline looked astonished. He, an intimate friend of Miss Bolton! He talking of having spent a day at Holly Park!

Quill continued. "Never fear but I'll hold *your* horse, with the greatest pleasure, and that of the young

lady with you, too. What greater honour could I have than to serve you both as your humble squire? Ah! a gentleman is most truly a gentleman when he is at the feet of the ladies."

Lady Caroline could not restrain her laughter. Lord Fitzarthur was so ashamed of having asked Miss Bolton's friend to take care of his horses that he looked quite confounded. Sarah, mortified beyond measure, and especially at his congratulating her on being "so grandly mounted," said coldly to him:—

"Mr. Quill, you had better not stand so close to this horse or he will kick you."

"Oh, I am not a bit afraid; shall I assist you to dismount?" said he; and at this moment the groom who had been sent on the message, arrived. He touched his hat to Lord Fitzarthur, and said:—

"My Lord, the articles are ready and will be sent home this evening."

Quill hearing him say "my lord," started, looked at him, and recognising the Northwood livery, he discovered who it was that had asked him to hold the horses. After they had all alighted, Quill whispered to Sarah:—

"Is that Lord Northwood's son who is with you?"

"Yes."

He then crept up to Lord Fitzarthur.

"My lord, I beg to apologise for having spoken so stiffly to you just now, but I was a little nettled at being treated like a complete snob, and I dare say your lordship would not have asked me to perform that low office for the payment of a shilling if you had known that I was a perfect gentleman, and a great friend of Miss Bolton here."

"Certainly, sir," answered Lord Fitzarthur, "I should have been as far as possible from such conduct had I known your position, and I now beg your pardon; and I also

most humbly apologise to Miss Bolton for having treated her friend in so unworthy a manner;" and he bowed low to Sarah in a way that she fancied was half ironical, so she preserved an angry silence, which he construed into a determination not to forgive him, and so proceeded:—

"It was very stupid of me certainly; but the young gentleman was surrounded by so many boys, that I could see only his head, and——" She interrupted him.

"Indeed, Lord Fitzarthur, to apologise to me is quite unnecessary; I take no kind of interest in this person, though I happen to be acquainted with him; I do not wonder at all that you mistook him for one of the lower orders; he is poor, but a gentleman's son, and a well-conducted young man."

"Oh then, I am actually shocked at having insulted him so! I must make friends with him," cried Fitzarthur, whose generous spirit shrank above all things from wounding the feelings of a "poor gentleman." "What is his name?"

"Quill."

This little dialogue was carried on in a low voice, while Quill stood waiting humbly at a short distance from the speakers.

"Come, Mr. Quill," said Lord Fitzarthur, in a most affable manner, "let us all sit down on this bench under the tree; the ladies will have no objection to rest themselves. Davis, walk the horses about the green."

They all sat down; Quill looking delighted, but respectfully leaving a space between himself and Lord Fitzarthur. Sarah could scarcely believe her senses that Quill and Lord Fitzarthur were seated beside one another, preparing for social converse. What would she have said to any person who had told her, when they were leaving the Abbey an hour ago, that this would take place before her return back? She would have

laughed such a one to scorn. Surely Quill was the bore of her existence; her standing mar-plot. Not only was he always stirring up and making muddy the stagnant waters of her daily existence, but when of a rare time the current of her life took a bound forward, and, leaving behind its torpid bed, danced and sparkled for an instant in the sunbeam, he was still at hand to dash it with his poisons, and send it creeping back into its ancient hollows. This was a far grander hit for him than his meeting with Mrs. Routledge;—his luck was unaccountable, actually unfair, according to her view of the manner in which Providence should deal with these wretched, shapeless sparks that flew off from Nature's anvil when she was curiously shaping her great masterpieces. And all his promotion took place through her means;—in fact she was introducing her fascinating friend Mr. Quill (dressed like a beggar, and talking like an idiot) to all her splendid acquaintances in every part of the country;—Miss Bolton and Mr. Quill would be inseparably mentioned together in all the gossip and jokes which the character of the little oddity would give rise to among the rich, the noble, and the beautiful. She settled that she would return home as soon as possible, and never go out among her distinguished neighbours again until she had insulted this creature in some way that would prevent him from ever more opening his lips to her. Little good indeed there was in being denied to him, when he flew to her on meeting her out riding, like a dog that had found his lost master. There was no guessing what the kind Lord Fitzarthur might do to compensate for the affront he had unwillingly offered him; he would —to be sure he would—ask him to come home with him and dine at the Abbey—to meet his friend Miss Bolton; —and before he went away at night the little thing would, with many bows and grimaces, consign her, and

Lady Caroline to boot, to the arms of the "Irishman," —and all in the presence of the Earl of Northwood and his son.

While she was chewing the cud of these "bitter fancies," Fitzarthur said to Quill:—

"I fear you find it rather up-hill work to cultivate the minds of these rough peasants."

"Indeed I do, sir;—I mean my lord;—and very few but myself would have the heart to go on; and all I gain is to be taken for one of them; because I carry my anxiety to benefit them so far that when I set out on a little progress among them I put on the very worst clothes possible, for fear, my lord, that any marked distinction in *appearl* might alarm or offend them; so I am not surprised your lordship thought me no better than my company. There is a famous Latin proverb,—it begins with 'Nozzy,'—I am afraid I forget the rest."

Lord Fitzarthur smiled.

"Perhaps it is 'Noscitur a sociis.'"

"Oh yes: your lordship seems a profound scholar."

Lord Fitzarthur gave him a sharp look, questioning whether he was ridiculing him; but observing the amiable simplicity of his face, he could not suppose it, and suffered him to proceed.

"But, my lord, we should forget private disadvantages in our effort to enlighten these poor working creatures. How painful to think that they should live under such grand laws as they do, and without knowing it!"

"And what particular point were you calling the attention of those boys to when we interrupted you?" inquired Fitzarthur.

"I was making known to them some of the rights which they quite unconsciously enjoy; I was explaining the noble Happy ass Corpus Act to them."

Fitzarthur and the ladies could not help laughing.

Quill was a little frightened: after his experiences in Æsop he was suspicious he might have pronounced the name of the act wrongly; but after a pause he preferred taking another view of their mirth.

"Ah, my lord and my ladies, we educated and well-behaved people may laugh, who run no chance of being sent to the 'donjon clink,' as the poets call the jail."

"And how did you make this law intelligible to them?" asked Fitzarthur. "What advantages did you inform them they derived from it?"

Quill got a little confused. "I told them—I explained to them—your highness—"

Lady Caroline, who was more amused than she had been for a long time, began to laugh.

"The aspiring blood of Lancaster," observed her brother, smiling, "yet does not aim at so exalted a title as that."

"True, true, *sir*," cried Quill, dropping plump from heaven to earth like a lark, "but I was conversing with a prince lately, so like you in his nice civil manner, that I was forgetting myself."

Here all three stared; Sarah as much astonished as the rest. What could he mean? was it the excess of illusion, or the height of mendacity? If she had thought of the Indian, even, she would never have identified him with "the prince."

"I did not know there was a prince in this country," said Lord Fitzarthur.

Here Quill got into a dilemma; he recollected that the Indian had charged him not to mention their interview to any one.

"Oh,—ah,—my lord,—there is some greatness that shuns the light; you mayn't be aware,—excuse me—." So, finding the fire too hot, he jumped back again into the frying-pan. "Your lordship may remember we were

discussing that act,—" He avoided naming it, suspecting that he had made some mistake.

"What act?" said Lady Caroline, who was not only getting into spirits, but becoming quite mischievous. This question was an unexpected shock to him; he must repeat the name of the act, so, as he took everything by the wrong end, he settled, though he thought it unlikely in such a common word, that he had blundered in "corpus," and he said—

"The Happyass Surplus Act, please your ladyship."

"You are quite sarcastic, Mr. Quill," observed Lord Fitzarthur; "you seem to think it a redundant act, no doubt because it is so often suspended."

"Oh, my lord, I think it the greatest blessing we have! If it was not suspended over the heads of those tyrannical magistrates, there is no knowing what they would do."

"Well, come then, tell us how you define it," said Fitzarthur, laughing.

"Define," repeated Quill thoughtfully.

"What good does it do people?" said Sarah, who knew how to put a question to him.

"Oh, yes, Miss Sarah, I see,—ay—exactly. Why, it prevents a man from being put into jail without his own consent."

"In that case, I suspect we might shut up our prisons," remarked Fitzarthur. "If a debtor could put his *veto* on the bailiff's invitation, or a murderer on the policeman's pressing *accolade*, where would justice be?"

"Well, my lord, I took the broad view of the benefit derived; I'm not entering into little details; not polite in the presence of ladies; too dry for them; besides they say a *veto* has very little power; only a kind of 'no.'"

"Rather too much power in this case," said Fitzarthur, laughing. Then, after a pause,—"Come, Mr. Quill, instead of giving this desultory instruction to people by

the wayside, without knowing exactly what they are fitted to receive, what would you think of assisting in the male department of our Sunday School? there your course of instruction would be traced out for you, and would be more simple; you should have a young class to begin with; Mr. Purdon says he has two vacancies now for junior teachers."

"I am afraid, my lord, he must fill up his vacancies without me," answered Quill, with a jerk of his head, which he meant to express disdain; "he will not easily entice me back again."

"So you have been teaching there?"

"Yes, my lord; but the rector and I had a little falling out."

"How could you possibly quarrel with *him?*" asked Lady Caroline.

"Indeed, I will tell you, my lady. I was hearing my little class one Sunday, and I enlarged on prophecy, and pointed out some grand fulfilments of it. Then they asked me whether there were any prophets now-a-days; and I told them that prophets sent with messages straight from heaven, like Jeremiah, were all at an end, but the power had not quite died out, to show the infidel such things had been, as they could be now."

Fitzarthur stared.

"And what instance could you give that such miraculous power still existed?"

"I told them, my lord, that a few wise men were now able to foretell eclipses in a most marvellous manner; mentioning long beforehand the very day and hour when the heavenly body would be darkened, and even whether part or all would be obscured. Then the teacher next to me suddenly stopped his business, and told me that I was misleading the boys, and that what I called prophecy was only calculation, and how bodies must, by the laws of

their motion, come round to a certain place after a certain time. So I exclaimed,—for indeed, my lord, I was exasperated,—'Sir, your rationalism is eating into the vitals of our faith!' Then, my lady, he took out his watch; 'Look,' said he, 'when both the hands reach the figure of twelve to-day, the sun will be at the merry-dan; am I prophesying now?'"

"And what did you say to that?" asked Fitzarthur.

"I simply exclaimed, 'Profane wretch!' and then he said this was no language to use, and that he would kick me out, only I was a fool,—yes, I am not ashamed to repeat his words, for we are warned that we shall be called fools by the wise of this world,—so, without answering, I turned to my class, but he marched off to Mr. Purdon, and whispered for a while with him, and then brought him up to me. The rector, in his nice manner, told me it was nearly time to commence the morning service, and that he was going to dismiss the scholars; he then desired me to call at his house the next morning that he might have some talk with me."

"And I hope you went," said Lady Caroline.

"Oh, yes, my lady; I rather wished to learn his opinions. When I arrived I was shown into the study, and there I found him surrounded with books, globes, and a thing he called a horrory."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Lord Fitzarthur; "and were you much horrified?"

"Rather grieved, my lord, for I saw that rationalism was making rapid inroads into the mind of this good man. He spoke of what he called my mistake, and talked of forces and attraction, and how the time a planet took to go round the sun was well known, and how the rest followed; and he offered to teach me how astronomers could tell the time that eclipses would occur in, without any miracle at all, and he drew the horrory towards him; but I

told him that I would not embark in such studies, and that horrories and globes were very good in their way, but when carried to excess, and worked for the abolition of miracles, they were tools of Satan. I said that astronomy was very well to a certain point, but when it began to interfere with holy things it should be checked, and that mathematics were only true to a certain degree, and that if Youclid did not tally with the Bible he was not to be believed. In fact, my lord, I felt called upon to speak very strongly to him."

"But Euclid does not interfere with the Bible," said Lord Fitzarthur, "and if you begin you cannot stop short in a chain of demonstration; you cannot help believing the whole book if you believe the first proposition."

"Ah, then, my lord, you see the evil of taking the first step in a wrong direction; these studies should be entirely excluded. There is a nice little French proverb;—my lady, I suppose you know French?"

Caroline assented.

"Well, so do I; that is, I am learning it from two young ladies (I take the edgings and flouncings of my hedgecation from the fair sex), and they made me learn this maxim among the very first sentences they taught me; I think this is it: 'Sumy kelly prime year paws key coot.' I find it comes in admirably now in my argument with his lordship."

He uttered the words of his French proverb separately, as if each had an independent meaning, underscoring every word with a nod of his head.

"I am sorry," said Lord Fitzarthur, "that our excellent rector could not convince you that to calculate an eclipse was not to predict it."

"Oh, my lord, there are different degrees of prophetic power, and I rate the lowest prophet higher than the wisest of your reasoning septics."

"What is a 'septic?'" asked Lady Caroline, laughing.

"I'll tell you, my lady," cried he, with a blended look of pride and meekness—the pride of the scholar enlightening the ignorant woman, the meekness of the man of humble rank looking up to the high-born lady. "A septic is a doubter; ready enough to believe his eyes, but having no faith. He believes the deceitful evidence of the senses, and the dictates of reason, and a dangerous thing called 'the moral sense,' above what he reads."

"I hope you do not consider Mr. Purdon a sceptic," said Fitzarthur.

"Oh, no, my lord; but as I could not convince him of the danger of too much learning, we parted, with a request from him that I would teach no more at the Sunday school."

"I trust you and he will come to a better understanding before long," said Lord Fitzarthur; "and if the ladies are rested we will proceed to the Vicarage."

They all rose and bade him good day, and he honoured their departure with a royal salute of twenty-one bows, and then sat down again on the seat to muse on his adventure, which appeared to him more like a dream than a real occurrence.

CHAPTER XXX.

JEALOUSY.

"Oh! if thou wilt not give thine heart,
Give back mine own to me,
Or bid thine image thence depart,
And leave me lone, but free."

MRS. HEMANS.

WHEN they had proceeded a few yards, Fitzarthur said to his sister:—

"Caroline, that little fellow must lead a jolly life between the *Happy-ass* and the *Merry-dan:* don't you think so?"

"Oh, yes;" answered she, laughing; "only his pleasure must be alloyed a little sometimes by the dread of the horrory."

"What an amusing creature he is! Sarah, I am surprised you never told me that there was such an original in the country, and that you were acquainted with him."

"My great object," said Sarah, "is to forget that he exists when he is not encumbering me with his presence. I wish heartily that I had not, by an unlucky chance, got to know him."

She then eagerly described the manner in which her brothers had met him, in order to prove that it was unintentional on her part that he had become a visitor at her father's house, and that she could not well shake him off, as the intimacy had commenced by an act of kindness on Quill's part. She complained of his shabby dress, his pretensions, and his ignorance.

Fitzarthur seemed vexed at her asperity.

"It appears," said he, "that he was very good-natured on the occasion of the accident; he cannot help his poverty; you say he is a gentleman, and I can see that he has a mind which, though broken into fragments, as one may say, has something delicate and half-poetical about it; his devotion to the ladies is apparent: I think, Miss Bolton, I would bear with him," he added, almost timidly.

"And what can be more agreeable on a dull day in the country than to have such a comical creature to amuse one for half an hour?" said Caroline.

"That might be very well," answered Sarah, "if he was like a jack-in-a-box, that you could let start up when you wanted a little sport, and then shut in again when you were tired of it; but in the case of a thing possessing the power of spontaneous motion and an independent will, the case is quite different; you would find it a perfect nuisance if you had not the option of regulating its mechanism."

Lord Fitzarthur smiled at her haughty and contemptuous language.

"And does he not visit and dine at Holly Park too?" said he; "I believe the Routledges are the nicest people in all the country; I am very sorry they are so far from us."

"Yes," said Sarah, "he met the ladies by chance, and they asked him to dine; it was very strange."

She forbore to tell her own share in the business; she thought too, that the aristocracy were very fond of legislating for the rank below them, and of telling them what they should be content to bear, and what glad to get; but they set up a very different standard for themselves. She wondered whether Lord Fitzarthur would be pleased if Quill could walk into his sister's drawing-room whenever he liked, and remain there as long as was agreeable to him, and say whatever came into his head; and it was her opinion

that though she had not a title, she had a mind, and an education, and exclusive tastes, that gave her a right to be full as particular about her associates as any lady who might boast of superior rank.

Caroline for the moment could talk of nothing but Quill.

"Brother, were you not amused at his dread of rationalism, and his veneration for everything incomprehensible and miraculous? It was an error on the right side, was not it, dear?"

"I cannot go so far as that, my love," answered he; "where there is error there cannot be anything right; his opinions are monstrous, as you must have noticed, and carried out to their legitimate conclusion would be as ruinous to religion as the honest attacks of her most declared enemy."

What answer Caroline would have made to this can never be known, for they here turned into the gate opening from the green into Mr. Davenport's pleasure-grounds, and as they wound up the walk leading to the shrubbery, emerging from the dense foliage into the broad sunlight, Dr. Campbell suddenly appeared before them. He shook hands with them all round; he looked weary, but not dispirited.

"You are probably going to inquire for Mrs. Davenport," said he to Lord Fitzarthur.

"Yes," answered he, "I hope she is better."

"She is going on favourably, but must be kept very quiet."

"Oh, never fear us, we will approach the house as stealthily as burglars," said Fitzarthur, laughing, and turning to his sister, but she did not join in the mirth, and looked pale and agitated. He noticed it, and turning quickly away from her said to Campbell, with an effort to be playful, and to conceal the uneasiness that rushed upon him:—

"Is your patient troubled with 'thick coming fancies,' that she requires to be kept so still?"

"There are other 'thick comers' more substantial than 'fancies;' particularly in a clergyman's family," said Campbell, somewhat bitterly.

"Oh, I understand; you have had another olive-branch; the giant's hand has been strengthened by a new arrow; well, we will wish him joy if we meet him."

"No, no;" said Campbell, hastily; "all chance of that is destroyed for the present; the giant took the lady out to drive with a horse that possessed every good quality under heaven except reason, if it had not a little of that too; it was as gentle as a lamb, as quiet as a mouse, and as amenable as a baby;—so this combination of all these amenities took an early opportunity of running away, and dashing them both out of the gig; happily they were not hurt, but the fright did Mrs. Davenport serious injury; however, thank God! she is out of danger, but requires great care and quietness, and my chief object now is to save her from her husband, who having first been near killing her with his imprudence, is now very likely to kill her with kindness if he is not watched. Fortunately he has been summoned to visit a sick person, after which he is to take the chair at a religious meeting; so, having comfortably disposed of him, I am hastening to see another patient who must think me very remiss indeed;—you, too, Lady Caroline, have reason to charge me with negligence, it is so long since I have called to ask how you are going on; I have been greatly occupied, but I hope to look in on you in a few days."

"Well, do not forget to do so," said she, brightening. "We shall be expecting you; you perceive I have got Miss Bolton with me."

"Yes; I am happy to see you together; farewell, I am in great haste."

He walked on; but as he passed Sarah, he said to her in a low voice, with that smile of his :—

"When you arrive at the Vicarage door do not knock, only ring the bell; you will be answered without delay." Sarah nodded assent, and they proceeded.

"Can a woman refuse anything to such a look as that?" whispered Lord Fitzarthur to Sarah.

"Really I cannot answer for women in the abstract," replied she; "all I can say is, that his face would make no difference with me, if I did not choose to grant his request; in the present instance it is a fair and simple one—he merely begs we will not make a noise by knocking at the door, but will ring the bell."

Fitzarthur was amused at her sententiousness; he forgave her now for granting Quill no quarter, for it was the same high scorn and haughty self-esteem with which she spurned him that enabled her to deal so lightly with the attractions of the "dispensary doctor," which were telling cruelly on feebler souls.

Lady Caroline, whose ear had caught Sarah's last words, exclaimed, peevishly :—

"Ho! what a fuss he is making about her! Freddy, we had better not go there at all."

"Oh, Carry!" cried he, laughing, "will you be guilty of such a libel on your sex as to say you dare not trust yourself on any expedition that cannot admit of noise, and tumult, and cackling? Come, Miss Bolton, can you answer for yourself? Will you undertake for five minutes the heavy restriction the doctor has laid upon us?"

Sarah declared that silence and quiet were just suited to her taste, and Caroline said, still peevishly :—

"You know very well, Freddy, that you often rate me for being so stupid, and silent, and inanimate—so your joke is very *malàpropos;* I don't want Dr. Campbell to blame us if Mrs. Davenport happens to be worse this

evening; I suppose her husband spoils her, and that she makes an unreasonable rout about herself; Dr. Campbell never was so uneasy about my being disturbed when I was at the very height of nervousness."

"Come, come, little puss, you have never been in her situation," said he, archly; "and as to pets,—you had better be tender towards them; I should be glad to know whom papa is spoiling more and more every day."

Near the door they met four little children jumping and playing; they looked at the strangers with their laughing blue eyes, first boldly, and then shyly, on finding themselves noticed; the whole concluded of course with the "flight to the osiers." When they were scampering away, Fitzarthur said to his sister:—

"There go some of Mrs. Davenport's 'thick coming fancies,' Carry."

"Indeed she seems to have plenty of 'fancies,'" said she, treading mincingly on the gravel lest she might be noisy.

Sarah rang the bell, and a nurse, with her face full of mysteries, answered it. Lord Fitzarthur fell back with that feeling of inferiority, of which men are always conscious when women, in the plenitude of knowledge and the glow of sympathy, are whispering together about those great events which concern the fountain of life.

"Oh, she is going on nicely, ma'am," said the nurse in answer to Sarah's inquiry, "but we have had an awful time of it; my dear lady and her husband would both have certainly died the night after the accident, only for that angel of a man—"

"What angel?" interrupted Lady Caroline, quickly.

"Dr. Campbell, my lady,—Dr. Campbell, to be sure. Such a job as he had! Master was a great deal harder on him than my poor lady; he could scarcely manage him at all; and when he ought to have been up-stairs

with her he had to be down in the study with him, comforting and 'spostulating with him, for he spent the whole night roaring—regularly roaring, ma'am, saying he killed her, and wanting to go up and ask her forgiveness before she died—as if he wanted to kill her out and out; and there was the poor doctor going from one to the other like an angel, as I said; as quiet and as collected and speaking as low as at any other time, but you might have seen him quivering in every limb, for I know he was afraid mistress would have gone off in a fainting fit,—she was so weak, besides being so fretted at Mr. Davenport's misery; for she could not but hear him praying to be let in to her. How the doctor saved her life is a wonder;—dear! he is very clever, and so good!"

"And how is Mr. Davenport now?" asked Sarah.

"Oh, in great spirits, ma'am, since he heard she was out of danger; we have work enough keeping him quiet; he is let in to her once in the morning for five minutes; the doctor would stay here night and day until she is well, only he has to visit other patients sometimes."

"Is Mrs. Davenport a great favourite with Dr. Campbell?" asked Lady Caroline, foolishly and improperly, of course; but when a tinge of jealousy was added to her natural curiosity, nothing could stop her.

"This family and he are great friends, my lady; besides, she must be a great favourite with every one,—she is such a sweet creature," answered the nurse.

"Yes, indeed," said Sarah, "every one likes her; for my part I love her; of course physicians are devotedly attentive to any one in danger."

They then left their cards and rejoined Lord Fitzarthur, who had succeeded perfectly in making friends of the little "fancies," and was actually kneeling on the gravel, in order to bring his height nearer to the level of the two little girls, who were chattering one at each side of him,

thinking him a boy like brother Jemmy. He darted up when the ladies approached.

"Oh, Arthur!" cried the elder girl, "your trowsers are all dirtied with gravel."

He had been teaching them his name, and endeavouring to make them say "Fitzarthur," but they dropped the "Fitz," with a puzzled, surprised look, as if they thought him a little mad, but took very kindly to plain Arthur, as that was the name of their second brother.

"Have oo a papa at home?" asked the younger girl.

"Yes, I have," said he.

"O den, he give oo a gait whippin' for dirtyin' oor trowsers!"

"But your mamma will save you from him, won't she?" asked the other; both making their induction from the particular cases which their home experiences had rendered familiar to them.

"Ah! but I have no mamma," said he.

"No mamma!" exclaimed she, opening her blue eyes with a look of serious amazement, as if scarcely able to realise such a misfortune, while little Katie, with an earnest face, began to rub the gravel off his knees with her little fingers, in hopes of enabling him to escape the impending chastisement.

"Come, brother, come," said Lady Caroline, impatiently; for she did not care for children in general, and was by no means inclined to make an exception in favour of Mrs. Davenport's. Fitzarthur kissed them, and walked away with the ladies, little Katie calling after him:—

"When 'ill oo tum again, Artur?"

During the ride home Lady Caroline spoke very little; her thoughts were engrossed by Dr. Campbell—the angel, as the nurse had called him. Yes; she had hit on the right title: he was an angel;—she worshipped him more and more every day, no matter what he thought of

her; she was sure he did not care about her, but she seemed on that account to set a higher value on him, to look up to him with more admiration than if he was at her feet, beseeching her to have pity on him. Now somehow, he seemed superior to her; a prize to be won, not a suitor to be favoured. How calm, and beautiful, and abstracted he looked just now when they met him! "among them, but not of them;" thinking very little about them, though he respected himself too much not to be polite. He was a guardian angel, intent only on his charge, and that charge was Mrs. Davenport. Pooh! she was making herself miserable for nothing; every physician was interested in his patient; it was a very disadvantageous thing to a doctor to have people die in his hands. What nonsense it was too, to fret herself about a married woman with six children, and a husband in the prime of life! as if Campbell could have any feeling towards her but one of friendship. Then she started at the manner in which she was letting her thoughts run on. What had the vicar's poor wife to do in the business! If there was no Mrs. Davenport at all, it would not make the least difference; Campbell did not care for herself,—that was the fact; her servants had never called him an angel, she knew they thought him cross enough, though they had not dared to say so; when she got hysterics or fainting-fits he generally walked out of the room, and left her to recover herself as well as she could; he never ran from her to her father with balm for each, but frequently evinced impatience when the earl was dwelling on his uneasiness about her, his only daughter. He did not care for her, then,—nay, perhaps laughed at her, and if she had a spark of pride she should renounce him, forget him. Ay, and if he did like her, what was the use of it? Would he dare to speak? or would he wish for the burden of a lady of rank for his wife with his small

fortune and frugal habits. Except he was insane he would not ask her to go and share Cypress Cottage with him, and her fortune would not be so great as to enable him to take a villa, set up a carriage, and hire a train of servants. So she would give up all notion of him;—horrible thought! maddening resolution! Better lie under the current of the cold, clear stream that surrounded Sans Souci, with all her agonies forgotten. Oh, that she was dead and at rest, without the sin of drowning herself! Here her horse gave a tremendous stumble, and only she sat her saddle very well, she would have been thrown forward on her head.

"Bless my heart, Freddy! why do you give me such a horse as this? he was on the point of dashing out my brains! Good heavens, what an escape I had!"

"Really Caroline," cried her brother, who, though pale with fright, was provoked, "he is the most sure-footed animal in our whole stud, but you are letting him go to sleep; of course he will fall presently if you hold him in such a manner as that; what is come over you? I have been noticing you this some time; that is your favourite Ganymede that you always bespeak."

"Oh, is it Ganymede? said Caroline, confused; "I forgot."

"I don't know what makes you so dull since we left the Vicarage," added he; "you were very merry before that, laughing at Mr. Quill."

"O yes," said she, striving to rally; "he was very amusing. Freddy, do you think Mrs. Davenport pretty?"

"Yes, altogether she charms me, so that I think if Davenport were to die, I would marry her in spite of her six children;" he spoke half jokingly, and the ladies laughed.

"If I were a gentleman I should be inclined to say the same," said Sarah.

"Well, I can't think her so beautiful," observed Caroline.

"I do not call her remarkably handsome," rejoined he, "but her beauty is of that captivating description that it seems as if it grew with, and was developed and fashioned by, her amiable mind; her face is, as it were, the organ through which a perfect soul makes itself sensible to the apprehension. Now I have seen women with exquisite faces, moulded like the finest statue, but they looked as if nature had first wrought them according to her very best type, and when they were finished breathed life into them; but you see the difference between that and the gradual growth of the moral and physical elements, placed in the germ together according to their due proportion."

"Brother, you are fantastic," said Caroline, in rather a jeering manner, but Sarah expressed herself pleased with his remarks, and quite of his opinion.

That evening Lady Caroline withdrew to her room after tea, to lie down, professing to be very tired after her ride.

The earl, Lord Fitzarthur, and Sarah, sat in the drawing-room window with the sash thrown up, enjoying the cool air, and the sweet scent proceeding from the long grass and the many wild flowers that were mingled with it.

"How delightful the country is in summer, Miss Bolton!" said Lord Northwood; "we shall soon be making hay, a process that I take great pleasure in,—do you? As to Caroline, I don't even yet know what she actually likes; positively I have almost given up the hope of interesting or amusing her; for my own part I like everything. Is it not curious that you young people are

much harder to please than we are, though it might be supposed that we ought to be tired of all worldly enjoyments, while to you they should possess the charm of novelty;—how is this, Miss Bolton? do tell me."

"For myself," said Sarah, "I can say with perfect truth that I delight in simple, natural pleasures, but I allow this is not generally the case with young people; children indeed are pleased with everything, but in the next stage, when the desires become enlarged, and the fancy takes a bolder flight, we grow discontented with a world that does not satisfy our aspirations, or give us embodiments of the images that dance before our imaginations; we indulge our baseless visions for a while, quarrelling with everything external to us as tame, false, and contemptible; but I need not tell you, my lord, how bitterly we learn our error, how we gradually waken, and become induced by experience to take with gratitude what we can get, in preference to waiting for ever for what we have settled ought to be, but which yet is not."

She heaved a sigh as she concluded; it appeared as if she had already gone through all the stages herself, and had prematurely arrived at the last.

"I think you are right, Miss Bolton, in your general view," said Lord Fitzarthur; "but I am afraid my poor sister's case is of a more peculiar character."

"Well, then, I am sure, Freddy, I do not know what else I can do for her," cried her father; "I have done everything—everything I can compass, except marrying her; so I suppose I must try and find the husband for her as my last effort. The best remedy perhaps after all;—eh, Miss Bolton?"

What Sarah thought on that subject we cannot pretend to say; her answer was evasive.

"I doubt, my lord, that she will ever have more

sources of happiness anywhere than she has in her present home."

"Yes, yes, I know she ought to feel that she is in a very advantageous position; mistress of my house, and fortune too, I may say; and much more mistress of myself than ever she will be of a husband I suspect; so that if the love of sway is as strong in women as the poet says,—(Pope, I believe, eh, Freddy?) she might be satisfied with her present lot. But I must add—and what I say is somewhat akin to your own remark just now, Miss Bolton—that nature is a jealous mother; she vindicates her own superior power of pleasing us beyond anything we can invent for ourselves; dress, equipages, luxuries of the table, museums, literature, all these things are very well in their way, but durable happiness consists in domestic endearments, open alike to, and equally required by, the queen and the hen-wife; for my part I should find all these luxuries about me quite insipid if I had not my son and daughter, and I verily believe Caroline never will be happy until she has got a nursery full of little brats."

"Well then, sir," said Fitzarthur impatiently, "if you want to establish her in that way you had better take her out of this country as quickly as possible, for there is not a creature here, unless she marries that stone statue that she calls Anthony the monk."

"And so it is his name," answered the father; "and she knows more of the history of our ancestors than you do, my boy."

"I wish she knew less of it than she does, sir; she provokes me; perpetually moping in that Abbey; she had Miss Bolton there to-day for an hour,"

"But indeed I asked her to show it to me," said Sarah; "it is well worth viewing."

"Particularly so;" said Lord Northwood; "and did she tell you the legend? curious, is not it?"

"Yes," answered Sarah; "and she seems inclined to believe it all devoutly."

"And the worst of it is," remarked Fitzarthur, "that she sometimes fancies she is to be the descendant who is to expiate the sin of this Lady Adela, and I cannot talk her out of her nonsense; I told her that though, in some religions, merits passed rapidly from hand to hand by the aid of a little money, in no religion is one human being reckoned adequate to expiate the sin of another; and, as you say, Miss Bolton, she seems very well inclined to believe also in the transformation of the monk into stone; so I called her attention to the spot where he lay,—a niche in the wall;—now that could not have been his bed; in the other cells there are no niches in the wall; all the monks slept in little moveable bedsteads, Anthony as well as the rest. So I explained to her that when he disgraced himself the Abbot probably made short work of him as he did of the lady, and then shut up the cell until he had got a statue hewn, and a niche hollowed out to receive it, and when all was ready that he threw open the apartment and told every one the story of the transformation, to excite the awe and terror of all the neighbourhood; and I have no doubt they managed to make a little money on the occasion too. What other notion is this that she has got into her head?—oh! yes: I recollect—about the monk's soul being destined to remain in purgatory until the expiatory suffering of some of our family,—herself to choose; and how the statue will vanish from the niche, the soul escape, and the lady's happiness be wrecked, simultaneously."

He spoke bitterly and scornfully; Sarah smiled at the difference between his and his sister's manner on the occasion.

"It certainly *is* provoking, Miss Bolton; she contrives to extract some personal discomfort for herself out of everything. I am in hopes that if I can overthrow one point, her whole edifice will fall to the ground. I will take my stand on the purgatory clause; she sets up for a theologian, and I will make her ashamed of her ignorance. I will tell her that she or her informers have committed a capital blunder; surely persons guilty, like Anthony, of a deadly sin, do not go to purgatory, they go direct to the place of torment; why should they be purified for a heaven they cannot hope to attain to? don't you think with me, sir?"

The earl, thus appealed to, cried out:—

"Oh, my dear boy, do not ask me any questions about the Roman Catholic religion, or any religion except my own, for I find it quite enough to manage to understand that one, and a little too much at times, when I begin to reflect upon it. I wrote to my cousin, the Bishop of—— lately, to inquire, why, if a sacrament was an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, our church excluded confirmation and orders from the list, for we acknowledge the grace and the sign in those rites, and I thought their exclusion very arbitrary—very arbitrary indeed; and his answer was quite unsatisfactory,—highly so."

"I have no doubt of it, sir," answered the son. "However, I think I am right about the popish notions of purgatory, and I hope I shall make her ashamed of herself."

"Indeed, Lord Fitzarthur," said Sarah, with her quiet good sense, "I do not think there will be the least use in arguing with her at all; the best way to put the legend out of her head is to put something else into it, and that might be done by change of scene."

"Change of scene! change of scene!" cried the earl;

"why I am tired to death 'changing the scene;' no panting drudge at the Haymarket is kept busier in that way than I am; from this place I won't stir until I have executed some plans for the benefit of my tenants; we owe a duty to them as well as to our children; I have done all I could for her, and she must be content."

"*Must* be *content*," repeated Fitzarthur to Sarah in a low voice, with a smile, and here the entrance of the object of their anxiety put a stop to the debate.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE DOCTOR AND THE HEIRESS.

"Poor Julia's heart was in an awkward state,
She felt it going, and resolv'd to make
The noblest efforts for herself."

BYRON.

DR. Campbell, after his interview with the Abbey party, mounted his horse, and set off with all speed to visit Miss Neville. He had not seen her since the day she desired him, in her haste, to come no more. He had sent some written directions and an apology for not appearing in person, as he was occupied with a patient who was dangerously ill. She fancied that, perhaps, this was an excuse, and that he was prepared to take her at her word and discontinue his visits. A few days passed, and she had time enough for reflection. Her sister was cold and silent; there was something different from her wont in Miss Cope also, though she was as obsequious as ever; Miss Neville could not define it nor put it into clear conceptions, much less into words; so she could not allude to it, but she felt it. Accordingly, she was left alone and without sympathy, as she generally was in all her trials; she had no one to commune with but her divided self,—she might appeal from the passionate woman to the proud heiress,—that was all. She wished to take her own way, but her calm judgment whispered to her that it was probably the way to destruction. She was forlorn, but perhaps thereby more secure. The advice of a well-

meaning and anxious friend, generally considered invaluable in emergencies of this kind, yet frequently produces an impulse in the direction to which we are already tending. The prudent but unpalatable counsel that he gives, suggests so many plausible arguments in our own favour, which would never have presented themselves without the excitement of opposition—we think of so many ingenious reasons for differing from him, and for taking our own way,—that we marvel we have ever hesitated about the step from which he is endeavouring to dissuade us. Left to ourselves only, and our own moral sense, we are likely to deal much more hardly with ourselves. We understand our case far better than the world generally gives us credit for doing, and conscience is very just. But when we lay our condition open to a confidant, one tinge of unfairness that we may detect in his view of it—and he is often unfair from too much zeal, —the least exaggeration of our fault or our folly that he may make in his earnestness to rid us of it, sometimes drives us to the commission of that from which our private judgment and silent verdict on ourselves had well nigh saved us.

Miss Neville then, left to her own wisdom, was in a more advantageous state for doing the right thing than if she had opened her heart to those about her. Her over-rigid and rather narrow-minded sister was just the person to create the dangerous reaction referred to above; her mother was shallow, without any earnest or fervid feeling, and lived, or rather starved, on a little set of conventional notions. "Self-respect," "suitable matches," "the opinion of the world," "prudence," "necessary sacrifices," were the perpetual texts over which her social theology poured its finest gushes of eloquence. Miss Cope, of course, was not to be dreamt of in any way but as a tool that might be required. She acknowledged to herself that she

was pursuing a frantic course: supposing the man even liked her, she was but a short time acquainted with him, and what did she know of his temper or his former life? he seemed, indeed, to have some weight on his mind, to be tired of everything the world could offer, and to be insensible alike to the attractions of women or the luxuries attainable by wealth. So it was probable he did not like her, and she had been on the point of laying herself and her fortune at his feet, and, from what she could divine, he was the very man who would have coolly refused both. Why should he marry a person he did not love, to become possessed of wealth that had no charm for him? And if it had a charm for him, and if he made her his wife for the sake of it, would she be happy so placed? She who had been ever looking for a heart devoted to herself and regardless of her other advantages, and which would prize the riches of the affections above gold and precious stones. But he did not care a straw about her, and often had the manner of a pre-engaged man—and oh! what an abyss she had been on the point of precipitating herself into! What a humiliation she had barely escaped! 'Tis well it was not yet too late; he had been so absent the last day he visited her, that he had not noticed anything particular in her words and conduct—she was sure of that. Her foot was nearly well, and probably one visit more from him would be enough—that is, if he chose to come—she would never send for him again;—and then he should be fee'd and thanked and all would be over, and she and her mother and sister would be going to some watering-place when the season was a little more advanced, and she would soon forget that she had ever seen him.

Dr. Campbell, in the mean time, rode along with very different thoughts from those that had harassed him the last day he was going to Sunville. Then he had pictured to himself Milly dashed to the ground by the wild horse;

bleeding and dying by the road-side. Now the worst was over; she had had a narrow escape, certainly, but no serious injury had been sustained, and she was in a fair way of recovery. So his heart was light, and he began to reflect on his behaviour to Miss Neville the last day he visited her. His mind was so wretched then that he had but a vague idea of what he had said, but he was convinced he had been very rude to her; he remembered what mortification she had betrayed at various times during the conversation, and he suspected he had often spoken without knowing rightly what he had been saying; —he concluded he had been actually savage to her; he was conscious that his temper often became ruffled when his feelings were disturbed, and he was sorry for the language he had made use of to Quill in the lobby at Holly Park,—but what was that compared to speaking unbecomingly to Miss Neville? It was scandalous not to rule himself a little, and be more bland to ladies who were accustomed to receive the homage of the world. In short, the higher his spirits grew about Mrs. Davenport, the more heinous did his demeanour towards the Sunville heiress appear in his eyes. But he was determined to make up to-day for his past deficiencies, and to be as civil and kind as possible. He was to spend all the evening at the vicarage in Milly's bed-room, and no one should come near it while he was there; the contrite Davenport was as docile now as a child; if the doctor kicked him down-stairs, after the injury his rashness had done his wife, he would have thought himself only properly treated—poor fellow! Then, it was surely no great trouble to be civil and affable to another lady for half an hour.

Arrived at the gate of Sunville, he took out his watch: "Half an hour here, or three-quarters perhaps, according as I find her—for I must please this girl to-day—then

back to the vicarage—I shall be there before her husband, or as soon at least, if I ride fast; time enough to keep him from going up to her room, and agitating her with what he calls his love."

The horse's hoofs were heard on the gravel by Miss Neville, who was alone in the drawing-room, not expecting him, thinking rather that he would never come again—but still thinking of him. Her heart beat, she half looked up, caught his figure as he passed the window, and turned very pale. He entered the room as an accomplished physician should, with the flexibility of the serpent and the noiseless footfall of the cat, and on his face was his cruelest smile.

Although she was expecting him, she started, for she saw him before she heard him, and the meteor flash of that deadly smile was never forgotten by her. True to her resolve, she assumed what she intended should be a cold and proud air, but the coldness was only suppressed agitation—the pride, awkward timidity.

He was pale, for he had slept very little since Mrs. Davenport's misfortune, but he was all gentleness and kindness. He noticed the strangeness of her manner, and attributed it to displeasure at his long absence. He apologised humbly, and she bowed. He pronounced her foot nearly well.

"Your mother managed it very cleverly; you know I wrote her a note containing a few directions."

"My mother did nothing for me, I can assure you," answered she, hastily; "when doctors are too busy to come to me, I doctor myself."

"Oh! then, I congratulate you on being such a capital doctor; you deserve a diploma."

As he said this he looked at her with a softness and a kindness, and a lurking smile, in a way that he had never done before. Her frame was shaken to its centre; all her

proud resolutions were melting away—there was no use in arguing about it—he was an adorable creature. She remained silent; she had something cold ready to say, but it died on her lips.

"How are you getting on with Paley's 'Theology' and Robertson's 'Charles the Fifth'?" asked he. "I suppose you have made a great progress in them since I was here."

Was this the man who, when he visited her last week, had forgotten that he ever recommended these books for her perusal? What change had come over him? Was he beginning to take a real interest in her? And would it be consistent in her to be haughty and stiff now, after having nearly worried him into directing her studies; and having promised that she would attend particularly to any of his suggestions? So she raised her eyes, prepared to give him a civil answer, and saw his fixed on her—beseechingly she thought—no, not exactly that, but it was a look that took away from her, for the instant, the power of utterance. He, on his part, felt his watch ticking against his heart, and he knew that every stroke was bringing him nearer and nearer to Milly's bedside:—why would not this girl be more tractable and let them separate on civil terms in half-an-hour? When she looked at him without speaking he let his eyes drop with a feeling of disappointment—she would keep him the whole day—she was playing and torturing him like an expert angler. She put her own interpretation on the movement.

"I am afraid," said she, "that you are vexed at my being so slow to give a good account of my diligence; but, indeed, I have scarcely looked into them since; I could not help it; I was in bad spirits, but I will work hard at them henceforward."

She forgot to add:—"If Miss Cope has not burned them according to my orders."

"Well, that is right," said he; "there is nothing like having some fixed object in view for keeping up the spirits. Settle that you will make yourself mistress of the history of modern Europe; 'Charles the Fifth' is a good book to begin with."

"Very true, but I shall not know what to go to after I have finished that."

"Then, if you will allow me, I will suggest something."

"Oh, I should like it of all things!" she exclaimed. "And Paley?—I suppose when I have done him, I need not pursue that subject any farther."

"On the contrary," said he, with a flash of raillery from his eye, "I was afraid you would find Paley quite too elementary now you are turning doctress; I was expecting you would ask to borrow some of my professional works."

"Oh, you are too bad!" she cried, looking delighted; "well, really I think I should like to change places with you for a little time: come, will you take Sunville and let me go to Cypress Cottage for a week and play the doctor among your patients?"

He was in good spirits to-day; and, truly, when ladies say such things as these, men are not to be blamed if they carry the bantering perhaps a little too far. He said, in the arch, playful manner that became him so well, accompanying the words with a look which was fraught with more meaning than he cared to put into language:—

"I should be most happy to see you at Cypress Cottage, Miss Neville; but surely you will not make my leaving it a necessary condition of your visit."

Her blood stood still for a second. Good God! was this a proposal? No, no; was she frantic? That is not the ambiguous, impudent manner in which a soul like his would put the solemn question, on the answer to which the fate of two immortal beings was suspended. He was

jesting with her; if he was doing so too freely, she might blame herself; she had given him the greatest encouragement either to propose to her or joke with her, whichever he liked best. If he chose the latter she had no business to be angry.

All this passed through her mind like lightning. She answered without looking up.

"I know some bachelors give very pleasant *déjeuners;* when you give one we will surely all attend, and will not expect the host himself to be absent."

He was astonished at the sudden change in her manner from lively jest to dull seriousness; so he answered in a strain similarly altered:—

"I would do these things sometimes, but I am such a wretchedly stupid fellow, and my house is so small."

A sudden constraint seemed to have sprung up between them; he was sorry for his joke; he wondered why ladies would not take him easier than they did; it was a sad bore to have them getting into hysterics when he sang, and looking as rigid as Lot's wife if he ventured to be playful. He began to fiddle with a morocco miniature case that lay on the table near him.

"Open that," said she, glad to change the subject completely, "and look at the picture within."

He did so: it was the likeness of a gentleman in the prime of life; the features were pretty good; the expression languid and rather discontented, the cheeks greatly flushed.

"My father's picture," said she; "he died of a consumption, and was ill when it was taken; I am reckoned like him, but I do not think so myself—what do you say?"

He looked at the miniature and then fixed his eyes steadily on her face. The poor man was only doing as he was desired—comparing the two countenances—but she was unable calmly to bear having those killing eyes

thus riveted on her, and he was very close to her, too; she thought she felt them. Oh! what would she have given then to have been able to throw herself on his neck and ask to be his slave, his humble follower through all the "changes and chances of this mortal life," and in her profane adoration she was persuaded that then "her heart would surely be fixed where true joys alone are to be found."

She had set up a man above her Creator, and she was to reap the fruits of her choice. Mr. Routledge's prophecy was fulfilled; the hour of trial was come;—where was her guardian's song and its beautiful *refrain*, "My soul leans on Thee?" And what was her soul leaning on? the prop that is leant on age after age, and with the same success,—the broken reed. For the God-protected nation, that madly preferred the staff of Egypt to the invisible Hand, and for the infatuated maiden, who renounces every other earthly bond, however sacred, for the alluring object of a passionate desire, there is the same cure—experience that comes too late.

Miss Neville made a violent effort to be calm under that gaze, but she could not prevent herself from blushing crimson; she turned away her head, and said, as carelessly as she was able:—

"Well, what do you think?"

"I did not consider you like at first," said he, "but now I do;" and he turned, with a quiet smile, from the burning brow of the living, suffering daughter, to the carmine cheek of the steadfast, pictured sire. He looked at the face for a few seconds, and laid down the morocco case with a sigh.

"I have seen many people die of consumption," said he; "particularly young women; they lead more artificial lives than even men; they are less in the open air."

"And could you do nothing for them?" asked she.

"Ah, no, Miss Neville! am I a God to kill and to make alive?"

She gave a start; his random quotation had stabbed her; something told her that he was a God to kill her, though he could not cure her suffering fellow-creatures. But she strove to freeze her feelings with a jest.

"Perhaps you would not be so unsuccessful, if you did not, like Naaman, despise simple remedies. You see, as soon as he tried the cold water cure, he recovered; but our prophets, who are now applying that cure to consumption, are looked upon by you as dangerous quacks."

Campbell laughed.

"If you will show me one of these gentlemen restoring a patient's lungs whole, 'like a little child's,' I will become a convert to his system. Come, have you been out since your accident?"

"I was in the carriage yesterday, but it was so dull! I think I am fit to walk to-day."

"Yes; you may take a turn on a flat; not up or down hill." He drew out his watch.

"I believe *we* alone are privileged to look at a watch in the presence of ladies. Physicians must note even the 'diamond sparks' as they pass. I have a quarter of an hour to spare still: if you will allow me, I will attend you, and you can lean on my arm, if agreeable."

Her face lighted up.

"Oh, yes; I should be very glad of your company."

She rang the bell and called for a shawl and hat, and they set out.

"We will go on the flattest walk that can possibly be found," said she. "It runs along the side of a canal, that we have got dug for the purpose of irrigating our sloping fields; the land is poor, but, as the fields are so steep, we find it more convenient to fertilize them by irrigation than by top-dressing."

"Why, you seem quite a skilful farmer," said he; "I believe you can be anything you like."

"Oh! no, no; I cannot: but look, don't you think we are successful? see how brilliantly green the grass is!

"It is beautiful indeed," said he; "but where did you find the water for this irrigation?"

"At the upper end, near the place where we turned into this walk; it was the spring that put the plan into our heads; but it is not to the fount of the canal that I am going to take you; the termination of it is much prettier, where there is a waterfall."

The canal ran for about a quarter of a mile along the brow of the hill; the walk was on its right bank, and the fields on its left side sloped very abruptly, as she had said, down to the ravine below, through which ran a shallow brawling stream, which separated Miss Neville's property on that side from her next neighbour's. So the irrigation-walk was very elevated and cheerful, and there was a fine view in every direction.

What bliss she felt for the moment! She asked not how long it was to last, she surrendered herself to the transient intoxication. She was alone with him, supported by his arm, and listening to his sweet voice, and his intelligent and interesting remarks. The calm and the glory of early summer was all around them; the bustle of harvest was still distant,—the time of hay-making was not quite come; the meadows and the cornfields were waving in their solitude. Man, having done his first part, had laid by the plough and the harrow, and had quietly fallen back and left nature to prepare the crop for the autumnal jubilee. The birds were singing in grand chorus; this seemed the height of their reign; their young were nearly reared; the moulting time had not commenced, and the murderous sportsman, who scared the songsters, though he thought them unworthy of his

death-blow, was not yet in the field. It seemed an interregnum of rest from all human interruptions.

They reached the extremity of the canal, which ended in a craggy precipice, down which the water was permitted to tumble when the meadows had drunk sufficiently, and the lateral sluices were dammed up. This seemed the case now, for the stream leaped down the declivity in a very picturesque manner, and was received in a stone basin below, from which it rushed sideways into the shallow river, that, as we have said, ran through the ravine. In the little cove below, and opposite to the tiny cascade, there was a seat, backed with a thick boscage of laurel and holly.

Miss Neville looked pleased at the work of her genius, or rather that of her steward.

"Our little waterfall is not bad," said she; "I do not know whether it looks best from this height or from the cove below; but if you wish to survey it from beneath, there is a steep path, leading from where we stand, down into the cove; see! there it is. I am not to go off a flat to-day, but you may step down and look at it, and I will wait for you here."

"Pardon me, Miss Neville," said Campbell; "since you cannot descend, I will not leave you; I came out to support you, and not to run away from you."

He looked kindly at her;—that she saw; but she thought that, as he spoke, he gave a gentle pressure to the arm that was locked in his. Oh! how it thrilled through her!

He felt her trembling, but before he had time to ask her whether she was fatigued, his attention was attracted by a white figure, that bounded across the stepping-stones from the opposite grounds, and took its seat on the bench fronting the waterfall.

"Look down," cried he to Miss Neville; "Who is that?"

She immediately recognised the Indian in his usual costume.

"Oh! the poor Hindoo!" she exclaimed; "he is a most graceful, interesting creature. I am not sure that he is in his right mind, but he is perfectly harmless."

"Is it with your permission that he intrudes into your pleasure-grounds?" continued Campbell.

"Yes, I gave him leave; he is very fond of looking at the waterfall, such as it is; but I understood he would go there only early in the morning or late at night, when there would be no likelihood of his meeting us; I suppose he heard I was confined to the house, and thought he might venture. Did you never see him before?"

"I believe I did once," answered Campbell; "I have heard of him. How did he manage to get your permission to go into your favourite retreat?"

"He was in the habit of going there before we came to reside here; and, being there one day as usual, not aware of our arrival, he suddenly met me; he flew away like a bird, before I could address him, and the next day he sent the man he lodges with to apologise for his intrusion, and I sent word he might continue to visit the cove if he pleased, at the hours I have already mentioned."

"Does he lodge near this?" said Campbell.

"About a mile off, with a farmer named Higgin, a tenant of mine."

"Higgin!" cried Campbell, starting and colouring.

"Yes; I hope you do not know anything bad of him."

"Oh dear! no; he is a very upright man. I was not expecting to hear him mentioned; he is son-in-law to an old woman who is under my care; one of those charmers 'who steal me from myself,' you know."

He strove to carry off his confusion by alluding, play-

fully, to a speech that by no means pleased him when she uttered it. She was gratified that he remembered anything she said on that unhappy day, and she answered gaily:—

"Oh yes; I recollect your peculiar taste; but I hope she is a nicer person than he is; he may be honest, but he is rather rough."

"Yes, she is much more cultivated; but what makes that Indian lodge with him, and why in the world has he taken up his abode in this country?"

She answered: "Higgin is not very communicative; he said, in a general way, that he was a noble fellow; that he believed he was taking notes in this country, with a view to bringing out some book when he returned to Hindostan; and that he was a 'fine scholar.' I sometimes think I would like to talk to him."

"You had better not," said Campbell, quickly.

"I will not, if you think I ought not," she replied.

"I don't wish to take so much upon me as to say you ought not; you have your mother,—you are safe in her hands."

"Then, indeed, I will not consult her," said Miss Neville, peevishly; "but I am ready to do as you desire me."

Campbell coloured; he did not know what Miss Neville meant by placing herself under his tutelage.

"I have no right over you, and I did not want to assume any when I gave that hint; follow your own good sense;—but you said he was mad; now, as a physician, I advise people to keep away from mad men."

"I only thought he looked a little flighty; but he cannot be mad if he is taking notes preparatory to writing a book: but I don't want to have anything to do with him."

At this moment the Indian looked up, and saw them

both standing on the brow of the cliff: he gazed earnestly at Campbell, and then making a salaam to Miss Neville, bounded across the stepping-stones and disappeared on the other side of the stream.

Miss Neville and Campbell returned to the house; they chatted pleasantly on their way back, and spoke no more of the Indian. When they reached the steps he would not go in; he was already later than he intended to be. She was much disappointed.

"And when will you come again?" she cried.

"You are not on my sick list now, but I will call soon to pay my respects."

"To pay his respects!" what frigid terms he was always using! they were like iron fingers grasping her heart. He rode away; she went into the house; her soul fainted within her. Oh! how could she get through the rest of the day, with her tiresome mother and her pedantic sister, and Letty Cope? she went into the drawing-room where she found the three seated at a work-table apiece; she threw herself on a sofa.

"You have had a fine walk with the doctor," said Mrs. Neville; "was that good for your foot?"

"I suppose it was, for he desired me himself to go out; so I took him to see the irrigation and the waterfall."

"And how did he like them?" asked Maria.

"But how did your foot get on?" asked the mother.

"It is very well; he will not have to visit it any more."

"Delightful!" cried the mother.

"Did he get his fee?" asked Maria.

"I'm sure I gave him no money," cried Miss Neville; "as if he was the baker or the draper."

"Oh! with all my heart," said Maria; "if he can live on the prospect of your lands from the top of the cliff, I

am happy to hear it. But perhaps you have plans for paying him on a more liberal scale than I can conceive."

"My dear Maria, what do you mean?" said Mrs. Neville. "I will send him a cheque on our bankers in Fleet-Street; will not that be the best way, Alicia?"

"Anything you please, mamma, only let me hear no more of it."

She then retired to her room with feelings very opposite to those she had entertained in the morning; she spent the evening reading Paley and Robertson, to the great surprise of her sister and Miss Cope, who looked at one another but said nothing.

CHAPTER XXXII.

SURPRISED!

"They were alone once more; for them to be
Thus, were another Eden; they were never
Weary unless when separate."

BYRON.

"Le traitre! de quel œil il m'a congedié!
Sans amour, sans chagrin, du moins etudié!"

RACINE.

MRS. DAVENPORT'S recovery was rapid under the care of her singular adorer, who looked for no recompense of any kind save that which his youthful dream still held out to him;—that some day or other she *must* be his. All restraint and awkwardness between them in private had come to an end long ago; but now even in the presence of friends they had thrown off the guarded manner which had long made them seem like strangers to one another in the eyes of the public; but nothing like levity or flirtation could be detected; they had the easy, loving manners of a brother and sister devotedly attached to one another. *L'amour n'a rien de si tendre, l'amitié rien de si doux*—might give an idea of the feeling that subsisted between them. However they very seldom met in company: Mrs. Davenport scarcely ever went to dinners, and the world pursued more exciting amusements than could be got by

prying into that quiet abode of refinement, and poetry, and peace, where those two daily wandered into the sacred memories of the past, which, having lost half their bitterness, still retained all their force.

In about twelve days from the period mentioned in the last chapter, Mrs. Davenport was able to come down to the drawing-room, and Lord Fitzarthur, who really admired her very much, requested of his sister to go to see her; he would not go until she was quite strong. Lady Caroline, who was beginning somehow to dislike poor Mrs. Davenport, proved a little refractory; but Miss Bolton, who was still at the Abbey, pressed her to gratify her brother, and offered even to stay a day longer in order to accompany her. This put her into complete good-humour, for she could not bear to think of losing her friend, and being left once more to her own thoughts, her brother's suspicious scrutiny, and her father's officious attentions. Her wild and feeble resolution of giving Campbell up had vanished the very day it was formed; she give him up, indeed! she had never in her life made a sacrifice of anything she longed for, and she did not know what self-denial meant, and she might as well think of getting herself flayed alive as of yielding this object of her adoration without an attempt to obtain it. But how attempt it? she had modesty and pride sufficient to save her from doing anything indecorous, and her conflicting feelings, and the necessity of veiling them, sometimes drove her to the verge of madness; but to give up an idol on which she had set her heart was a mode of solving her difficulties that she henceforward flung from her with horror; those persons may welcome the crown of martyrdom who have spent their lives under the voluntary scourge and the self-inflicted hair-shirt; but it was not for her to spring from the bed of rose-petals and the night-wreath of poppies, from the cup of Œnomel and the song of the syren, into the centre

of the blazing faggots: the fiends themselves would not demand so much.

As soon as she had consented to visit Mrs. Davenport, she became impatient to set out, and was ringing the bell every minute; her great object was to get rid of the present moment, which in her diseased state was the worst; arriving of course at the next "present moment,"—the worst in its turn.

When they were outside the gate she sent orders to the coachman to drive as fast as he possibly could, consistent with the safety of the horses; for a fear of her brother kept her in some check; so they tore away at the rate of fugitive lovers; then it occurred to her that if they went with such rapidity they might pass Dr. Campbell on the road without noticing him; for she was expecting him every day since their interview in Mr. Davenport's grounds, and she was determined to turn if she met him going to the Abbey; so then she called out for a slow pace;—it was a shame; the horses would be foundered, and what would Lord Fitzarthur say? so they crept along: she eyed every horseman that passed, but none was Campbell.

At last they arrived at the Vicarage. The door was opened by a young girl, neatly dressed, but with a simple, untaught look. Mrs. Davenport, in her anxiety to be useful to her husband's humble parishioners, was in the habit of taking their youthful daughters into her house to teach them to be servants, and when they were well trained she got them good places among the surrounding gentry, who were always delighted to get a girl out of the hands of "sweet, amiable Mrs. Davenport:" the poor lady had the worst of it herself, for as soon as one servant was drilled and despatched, another raw recruit supplied her place, but this inconvenience she did not mind provided she could be of use. So this young

girl, who was but six weeks in a gentleman's house, on being asked whether Mrs. Davenport was able to see company, said "Yes, ma'am," and quietly walked before the ladies to conduct them to the drawing-room. Sarah wished very much to desire her to announce them first and learn whether they could be admitted, but she scrupled interfering with Lady Caroline, who on her part was not thinking of anything that was going on about her, but was wondering at Dr. Campbell's unkindness in giving her up completely, and was heartily wishing the present visit over; so she mechanically followed the servant, and Sarah followed her with a feeling of uneasiness. They entered the drawing-room.

At the upper end of the apartment, on a low sofa with its head to the fireplace, lay Mrs. Davenport, reclining with her feet up; she was dressed in a beautiful kind of wrapper made of white cashmere, trimmed with green satin ribbon of the exact shade of the young oak leaf; her cap was of cambric and lace, adorned with ribbon of the same colour as that on her dress; the collar of her wrapper was fastened by a handsome mosaic brooch, representing the black doves on the Thessalian oak; her head was supported by a pillow covered with fine muslin, and lined with a fabric of the same colour as her ribbons. There was a slight pink tint in her cheeks, and she looked interesting and lovely.

But was she alone? A gentleman was sitting on the hearthrug with his legs stretched out and his head thrown back on the sofa; the ribbons of the lady's collar, not tied but merely joined together by the brooch, floated at full length over his forehead, and partially hid his face, as the back of his head rested gently on her waist. . . .

> "Oh, that I were a painter, to be grouping
> All that a poet drags into detail!
> Oh, that my words were colours!"

But Tasso can paint with his pen: let us fall back on him:—

"Sovra lui pende, ed ei nel grembo molle
Le posa il capo, e 'l volto al volto attolle."

This picture, then, Lady Caroline took in (as far as her short sight would permit), as soon as she appeared at the door. She, like all spinsters, had the greatest objection to witnessing a scene of connubial enjoyment; like all persons whatsoever, she had a horror of intruding on one, so she stopped short, doubtful and frightened, and so prevented Sarah from advancing and discovering the cause of her trepidation.

Meantime the gentleman sprang up and stepped forward to meet Lady Caroline. The seductive smile, the stiff bow, the figure, neither too tall nor two short, the gliding, noiseless motion,—all proclaimed him—not the husband, but—Dr. Campbell! He shook hands with both the ladies, perfectly self-possessed. Mrs. Davenport was now on her feet, too, ready to receive them.

Lady Caroline, scarcely able to speak, attempted to falter out an apology.

"Perhaps you are not well enough to see us yet."

He answered for her.

"Oh, yes, she is; and she will, I am sure, be greatly benefited by a little society besides that of her physician; she ought to be sick of me by this time;" giving her a peculiar look. Lady Caroline sat down.

The palpitation she had got on finding who the gentleman was, was still so troublesome that she could not speak another word.

Campbell continued:—

"I am obliged to be here acting Cerberus, and guarding the portals against this lady's children, or the six would make a rush upon her, and she would begin to nurse one, and whip another, and teach a third, until I

should have her so ill again that I should be detained another fortnight without being able to call on you, Lady Caroline; but I know you are in good hands," he added, looking at Sarah.

"She is going away to-morrow," said Lady Caroline.

"Well, I am glad she has found the way to the Abbey; I have almost forgotten it, but I hope to refresh my memory soon, if I can get leave of absence."

"And when will you come?" asked poor Caroline; "it is a long time since you promised to walk with us to see that old ruin on the top of the hill called Blackheath Hill; Miss Bolton and her brothers and sister are all engaged to be of the party, and I am sure they are tired waiting, but we do not wish to go without you."

"I am confident I shall be ready to attend you next week," answered he, and he then rose and approached the sofa on which Mrs. Davenport was sitting.

He said something to her in a low voice. She appeared to remonstrate, but he quitted her and went up to Lady Caroline, wearing the sweetest smile that he had ever addressed her with before.

"Mrs. Davenport is so ceremonious that I must undertake to plead for her with your ladyship. I will bear all the blame: I have forbidden her to sit upright;—will you permit her to resume her recumbent posture on the sofa?"

"Oh, of course," murmured poor Lady Caroline, and she felt her heart sinking within her.

"Really it is quite unnecessary," said Mrs. Davenport, but Sarah made her yield to directions, and settled the pillow under her, while Campbell took his seat on a chair at her head. A beautifully-bound book was lying on its face on the rug with the leaves crumpled.

"This is too nice a book to be left in this condition," observed Sarah, lifting it up.

It was 'Tennyson's Poems,' and was open at 'Love and Duty.'

"What a noble poem this is!" said Sarah.

"Oh! yes; we read it every day," cried Mrs. Davenport, innocently.

Campbell coloured.

"It cannot be read too often by any one," said he, "although it treats of only one particular sacrifice; but we all have occasion in the course of our lives to make some sacrifice or other,—though not, perhaps, that one—which is the bitterest of all."

He fixed his eye steadfastly on his Milly,—his no more,—and seemed to forget that the other two ladies were in the room. Caroline looked at him:—she had never till now seen such an expression in his face; he evidently worshipped that woman,—and she was beautiful,—far superior to herself, Caroline knew; but then she was Mr. Davenport's wife; she could not marry Dr. Campbell;—and while there was no actual impediment in the way, this infatuated young woman would not give up a pursuit the failure of which she was persuaded would end in death or insanity.

"It was very kind of you to come out on my account this hot day, Lady Caroline," said Mrs. Davenport, pushing her hair off her forehead with a gesture of impatience; "for my part I am in a perfect fever."

"Come, you are in no fever," said Campbell playfully, and he very quietly took the ringlets and settled them within her cap (it is the duty of doctors of course to perform any service for their patients which can relieve a disagreeable sensation); he next went to the table for some eau de Cologne, and, dipping a corner of her handkerchief in it, he gently patted her forehead. He then turned to Sarah.

"Miss Bolton, this self-willed specimen of womanhood

insists on cutting off all her hair; but I have absolutely forbidden such a barbarous act; not a lock shall fall while I have any authority here."

"You both seem to be reversing the order of things," observed Sarah; "in general the doctor orders the patient's hair to be cut off, and she rebels loudly against the loss of her principal ornament; when my sister recovered from her fever and found her hair gone she wept bitterly."

"Ah, I remember; poor child! it was I who cut it off. But this lady is not like any other woman in the world. Her study is how she will best make a fright of herself. The cap of the nun and the bonnet of the quakeress are what she would select if she was permitted to choose for herself."

Sarah smiled, noticing the elegance of her dress, and the elaborate care with which it was arranged. But Mrs. Davenport, poor creature! had undergone penance that morning at the hands of two or three tire-women with Mr. Davenport at their head; he had just got the dress from London, and he should see it properly put on himself.

Lady Caroline, who thought that ladies who found their hair too hot for them, and who required the doctor at hand every moment to settle the pillow, enforce the horizontal posture, and apply eau de Cologne, would be much better without the presence of strangers, was going to rise, when her attention was attracted by the loud crowing of a cock in the hall. Dr. Campbell and Mrs. Davenport looked at one another and smiled. The former said to Caroline:—

"I fear your ladyship thinks us perfect savages, and that we keep the poultry in the hall; but I suppose chanticleer will soon reveal himself in person."

This was the second time he called her "your lady-

ship" since she came;—he did it to torment her;—he knew she hated such formal respect from him;—could not he be tender, and playful, and spaniel-like to this person with whom he was so bewitched, without striving to mortify her at the same time? What had she done to vex him that he should drive the ploughshare over her back?

A minute or two after Campbell's last words the door flew open and Mr. Davenport burst in, carrying one child, and followed by five more.

"Heigh, presto, run for it!" he cried; "see who will get to mamma soonest, and have the first kiss!" Then perceiving Sarah and another lady, he exclaimed:—"Bless my heart! I was not prepared for so much good company. My dear Miss Bolton, how do you do? and how did you leave papa? And Lady Caroline Fitzarthur, I declare! How kind of your ladyship to call to see this poor old woman of mine the moment she was able to come down-stairs! A sad accident, wasn't it? We have all got a lesson; however, we will think no more of it except to avoid such rashness in future."

"The ladies were very much edified by the specimen of your vocal powers which they heard from the hall," said Campbell.

"Why,—I was not singing,—no;—was I? Oh, 'pon my life I was crowing!—I remember now. Ha! ha! ha! Lady Caroline, pray excuse me; I crow for this fellow every day; he delights in it;" and he tossed Sammy up to the ceiling. "But how are you going on, my treasure?" he cried, running to the sofa to his wife.

"Quite well, dear, quite well; don't come so close to me,—it makes me too warm," answered she, with the horror of a kiss in her heart.

"I am sure then these children crowding round you

will put you into a fever;—be off, children, be off! poor things!—they are so rejoiced to see her!"

"Nonsense," said Campbell, "do you think they will go for that kind of bidding? here, children, run out and play in the garden;" and he opened the door with a peremptory look, and dismissed four of them, leaving Sammy in his papa's arms, and taking the youngest but one in his own. He then carried the little smiler up to Lady Caroline.

"Is not that a fine fellow, Lady Caroline? I consider him one of my trophies,—a living monument of my skill. I saved his life. When his father and mother forsook him, I took him up."

He looked at Milly, challenging a scolding, but she said nothing; she spoke very little when her husband was present, and not much to any one at any time, except to Campbell.

Lady Caroline also made no answer; she could not force herself to utter a word; he had never before addressed her in so playful and familiar a manner, and now he did it because he was showing off Mrs. Davenport's child.

Campbell continued, taking no notice of her silence:—

"I sat up for a week with Billy, expecting he would die every night; but I brought him through, and now I say he belongs to me."

"Do you hear the fellow?" cried Davenport, laughing; "ladies, the way we forsook the boy was, he packed us both out of the nursery, saying she would be killed, and that I was a bore; then I think he turned the key of our room on us;—didn't he, Amelia, love? and now he has the impudence to say before my face, that the child is his:—but as to the matter of that, you may take him away with you—the five remaining will be quite enough for me;—besides the ten more that I suppose I'm to have," he

added, in the lamentable tone of a man who was looking forward to very bad treatment.

Sarah laughed, and so did Campbell, hiding his face at the same time on that of the child, and covering him with kisses, every one of which told like a bullet on Lady Caroline's ear.

"Bless me!" cried Davenport, suddenly, "your charming society, ladies, is putting all thoughts of business out of my head. I am to lecture this evening at seven o'clock at the 'Young Men's Improving Society,' and I forget what I am to lecture on; if I could find the card it would be all right; the lecturers' names and their subjects are printed on it, but I don't know where I threw it;—Amelia, my delight, do look about for it."

His poor wife rose from the sofa and proceeded to search for it in china vases, and worktable drawers, and all those hiding-places in which drawing-rooms abound.

Campbell was vexed, but he said nothing, fearing Milly would not like to be dragged into notice every minute.

"And are you to lecture at seven this evening without knowing yet what you are to lecture on?" asked Sarah, surprised.

"Oh, yes; an hour would be plenty for me to prepare in, if I could only recollect now what I am to be wise about; but at a push I can speak without any notice at all; I never was taken aback in my life. A gentleman was attacked by a sudden illness once, ten minutes before he was due in the lecture-room, and I was summoned to take his place, and I vow, Lady Caroline, I did not know at the door whether I was to hold forth on Byron or bees, or the early fathers or modern novelists; or the national debt or penny banks; or the pyramids of Egypt or insect architecture; and positively I would not have been afraid to undertake any of them;—but, what do you think the subject was?"

Poor Lady Caroline, who was wretched, and could scarcely attend to him, wished him forty fathom under—water? not exactly (she was not cruel, and moreover it would answer her purpose far better that he should live, and not set his wife free); but—underground perhaps;—in some mine in Cornwall,—anywhere but haranguing at her ear:—so she languidly brought out that most convenient and highly popular English answer:—

"I don't know, I'm sure."

"Well, indeed, you could hardly guess;" continued he; "it was,—'Which was likely to have the greatest influence on morals;—instruction by tales, or precepts from sermons?' Was not that a puzzler? You know the lecturer was not meant to be a clergyman, but I got the subject by chance, and could hardly avoid being one-sided, as in duty bound,—and—"

Campbell finished for him:

"And so you were forced to speak for a mortal hour against your conscience and your convictions."

"Ay, always a rap at the Church; you've often noticed him, Lady Caroline, haven't you? But I got on capitally, gave each method its due weight—(Amelia, my soul, have you found it?), and I was congratulated by numbers on the success of my lecture. Amelia, my heart, do stir yourself."

Here Campbell could no longer contain himself.

"I am quite astonished at you, Davenport, to speak to her in that way; she should not have stirred off the sofa at all!"

"Oh, mercy, I forgot! My love, pardon me! come and lie down directly." He almost carried her to the sofa before she could make any resistance. Then he began to settle the pillow. "Tell me just the way you like it to be; a little higher? no; a little lower; under your back or under your shoulders? wait, there is no

support for this side; pooh! there is not half enough of pillows; I'll run up for two more."

She was on the point of crying; she cast a helpless look at her guardian angel, who was at her side in a moment.

"For heaven's sake, my dear fellow, go away." He pushed Davenport aside, settled the pillow with his left hand, holding Billy on his right arm, and then took a chair and sat down by the sofa. "There, now," said he, laughing; "if you approach her again it will be over my dead body."

"Well, you are the most provoking delicious tyrant that ever assumed the principality of a man's house!" replied the husband. "Upon my word, Lady Caroline, I don't know what would become of me without this man! only he is giving me such bad habits: he makes a complete nurse-tender of himself. I can go to my lecture this evening with my mind perfectly easy, knowing what hands I leave her in. Amelia, my love, mind this child for a moment, as I must go and rummage for that unfortunate card."

So saying he threw Sammy on the sofa, but the child was immediately snatched up by Campbell, and placed on his spare knee opposite to Billy. Davenport made a rush to a beautiful work-basket belonging to his wife, and was just going to turn it topsyturvy in search of his lost treasure, when he suddenly stopped short, waved his hand, and cried:—

"Eureka! eureka! it has just flashed across me that the subject I am to lecture on is,—'Whether does our happiness depend more on our own hearts and tempers, or on our environments?' Am I not always doomed to be in some strait? Miss Bolton,—" he had grown tired of appealing to Lady Caroline, who continued speechless, and was now beginning to lose her sight,—"Miss Bolton,

what shall I say? In my own case, look at the treasures with which I am surrounded,—" and he pointed to his wife, Campbell, and the two children, who certainly formed a beautiful group;—" does not my happiness seem to centre in them? and yet I have naturally such a contented heart that I feel I should be happy alone in a desert. Come, I must go to my study, and put my individual feelings out of the question; we are far too prone to establish general rules on our private experiences. Ladies, will you excuse my unavoidable retreat?"

Lady Caroline roused herself. "If Miss Bolton is ready, we are going ourselves now; Mrs. Davenport must be tired."

They took their leave, and were handed into the carriage by Mr. Davenport, Campbell remaining in the position of defence that he had taken up.

When the visitors were gone, Davenport went to his study to prepare his lecture, and Campbell gave Mrs. Davenport some drops: neither of them made any observation to the other on the manner in which they had been surprised, but Campbell, having given the two children to their nurse, went down-stairs and rowed the girl tremendously for daring to admit strangers without first knocking at the drawing-room door, and asking her mistress whether she was willing to receive them. And while he was absent, Mrs. Davenport, not knowing what he was gone about, planned a lecture to be delivered to the delinquent when she was assisting her to undress, which, without being too severe, should render it certain that such careless conduct would not be again repeated.

Just as Dr. Campbell returned to the drawing-room after delivering himself of his wrath, a loud knocking was heard at the front door, and a few minutes after a servant rushed into the room to say that Lord Northwood's footman was in the hall with the news that before the

carriage had gone far, Lady Caroline Fitzarthur had fainted, and that Miss Bolton was greatly frightened, and did not know what to do.

"Oh, Dr. Campbell!" cried Mrs. Davenport, starting up, "will not you run to her immediately? I saw when she was here that she was ill; she could hardly speak."

"Lie down, Mrs. Davenport," said Campbell, sternly. She obeyed. He then turned to the servant. "Tell the cook to take some cold water and a napkin to the carriage, and to lay her as flat as she can and to sop her face;—that's all,—go."

When they were alone he said: "Milly, my sweet, doctors are not required for girls when they faint; she will probably be well before the cook arrives; I will not stir from this house to-day. Even though I am here, this room is a perfect thoroughfare, every one bursting in without regard to common decency, not to say decorum or etiquette; I am surprised that flamingo of a footman did not force in to you himself, and announce that this fanciful girl was dead."

"Oh, Robert, there is nothing fanciful in fainting!"

"She would not have got the habit of fainting for nothing if she had not been all her life working up fancies into substantial evils." He could not forgive Lady Caroline for catching him on the rug. "Come, go up to your room," he added; "this is no place for you; I will stay here and teach Jemmy his Latin lesson, and call you down when the hubbub of morning visitors is over,—every one of whom I will turn off," he concluded in a low voice. Mrs. Davenport went up-stairs, as she was desired.

Dr. Campbell was right in surmising that Lady Caroline would recover of herself before the cook and the cold water arrived. Mrs. Marsh, who could not run very fast, found her sitting on the grass by the road side,

with her head on Sarah's shoulder, very pale, but quite conscious.

"Oh, your ladyship! I am so glad to see you recovered! you will be nicely directly; you don't want to be drenched with cold water."

"Give me a little of it to drink," said Lady Caroline.

"No, no: beg pardon, my lady; those are not the remedies I give when a weakness comes over people." She drew a small bottle from her pocket. "Here is some brandy and water that I brought without any one bidding me, for I know a few things myself by this time; this is what master gives mistress when she is faint, as she often is when she's in the family-way,—and it does her a deal of good. Take it off, my lady."

"Does Dr. Campbell know that I fainted?" asked Lady Caroline.

"Well, I don't know, my lady; I only know the housemaid told me I had orders to take you cold water, but I brought something fitter for you: pray drink it."

Sarah seconded the request, and Caroline drank it, thanked the cook, and said she was ready to proceed; so she and Sarah went into the carriage. The draught was of use to her. The reader probably knows what it is to be in such a state of mental prostration as not to be able to cry. The feeling is not despair:—there is a sort of strength in that climax to suffering;—nor is it the rigid condition of those who have suddenly met with an astounding calamity;—it is cold, feeble inanition, the result of continual wearing anguish. The sorrow has mastered and benumbed us; we have not strength to rain it out in tears. Such was Caroline's situation when they gave her the draught, but thanks to the kind offices of Mrs. Marsh, she now found her powers stimulated into the active demonstration of her feelings, a state which, to those unac-

quainted with grief, may seem a very low level to be raised to.

So she wept abundantly for ten minutes; Sarah discreetly left her to herself, and at the end of that time she seemed much better, and was the first to speak.

"When Fitzarthur takes a thing into his head, there is no use in attempting to refuse him; I knew I was not fit to go out visiting to-day, but it would have been idle to tell him so. And that room was so hot;—not a window open, and Mr. Davenport was so noisy and troublesome, and his wife so full of airs:—don't you find conceited people sadly fatiguing?—I do."

Sarah concurred with her in thinking them exceedingly disagreeable, but confessed she could not include Mrs. Davenport in the number.

"Well, I think her quite intolerable; making such a fuss about the heat and her hair; and *he*, humouring her instead of stopping her. Who on earth cares whether she cuts off her hair or not? but I know very well why she wants to get rid of it; I can see through her. She knows what a colour it is, and she is meditating a dark brown front in its place."

This was the bitterest, or perhaps the only bitter, thing Caroline had ever uttered. But she was under the influence of that terrible passion, which acts on those over whom it has obtained the mastery, as fire does on the different objects that come within its reach, scathing, transforming, withering, aggravating as the case may be. As fire develops, in some substances, the qualities which to a certain extent they already possess,—hardening that which was already hard;—reducing to a liquid that which was before soft;—making that which was dense, denser;—so love frequently intensifies in its victim characteristics that before existed there in a feebler degree. We see it making the cunning more cunning; the fierce still fiercer; the ill-

disposed still more ill-disposed; and converting the naturally intriguing and manœuvring disposition into a perfect labyrinth of guile. Take an opposite view of these terrible masters. Fire can totally change the shape, substance, and hue of the matter on which it seizes. It will reduce the stiffest and most brilliant texture to a black shrivelled web, lighter than air. It will transform a heap of sand and potash into a bright, clear, coherent fabric, as hard as flint. It will convert cold water into a world-shaking agent. So love acts, but with more power. For whereas the force of fire only transmutes the forms of matter from one shape and consistency into another; the force of love seems, in some natures, to reverse the entire constitution of the soul. It can make the coward desperately brave; the shy and retiring, bold and aggressive; the faithful friend it will convert into the fierce enemy;—it hardens the soft; gives asperity to the tender; makes the frank man a deceiver; and turns the sweetest nature into the essence of gall. So it was now with the unfortunate Lady Caroline; she uttered language unworthy of her high degree—unworthy of her pure heart.

Sarah looked astonished and vexed.

"If you knew Mrs. Davenport, you would not speak thus; she is incapable of such littleness and vanity. And if she was even what you say, she would have no reason to be discontented with her hair, for I have heard Mr. Davenport admire it extravagantly."

"And is her husband the only man she wishes to please?" inquired Caroline, in a tone and manner that was still far from being her own.

"He is the only man she *ought* to wish to please," answered Sarah; "and from my knowledge of her, I deduce it as a consequence that he is the only man she *does* wish to please."

Caroline, though very fond of Sarah, was a little afraid

of her, so she pursued the subject no further. After a pause, she said:—

"What was Dr. Campbell doing when you came into the drawing-room?"

Sarah looked surprised.

"I really forget;—I think he was shaking hands with you."

Well, that was a comfort; she had not been in time for the rug scene; no one but herself had witnessed that, and it should remain locked in her breast for ever. As long as it was a vision floating before her mind's eye,—as long as she escaped hearing her own lips putting it into words, and the voices of others commenting upon it as a matter of fact—and perhaps a very shameful one too—so long she might have some sort of a doubt of its reality—some suspicion of a mistake—some misgivings regarding her own accuracy in taking in a kind of dissolving view, seen in the dim light of a darkened room—vanishing almost as soon as it was put together. Nothing stamps a thing so strongly on our minds in the light of a horrible, actual fact, as hearing it constantly in the mouths of others.

At dinner Caroline did not speak a word, and the tears were coming into her eyes every now and then. To her father's anxious inquiries she answered that she was very well; she had requested of Sarah not to mention that she had fainted, and the men-servants received orders to the same effect, otherwise Gordon would soon have conveyed the news to the earl,—"confidential men," who stand between the heaven of the dressing-room and the earth of the servants' hall, being perfect bores when there is a mystery afloat in the household.

Fitzarthur could get no satisfaction from his sister as to how Mrs. Davenport looked; Sarah was obliged to come forward and enlarge on her charming and interesting appearance; she also amused the gentlemen with a

description of Mr. Davenport's fuss about his card, and his encomiums on his own lecturing powers, but totally ignored the presence of Dr. Campbell in the domestic scene, for which her friend blessed her in her heart of hearts.

Fitzarthur laughed exceedingly, and declared that if he had the least chance of being in time he would mount his horse that moment and ride off to hear the "mad parson" lecture.

That night when Lady Caroline lay down and closed her eyes, the whole picture of the rug and the sofa rose before her;—ay, and she could not conceal from herself that she had observed something like streaks of white light shooting through Campbell's dark brown locks, as his head lay *sul grembo della donna*. What were they? They looked very like the fingers of a fair, delicate woman,—but—it was nonsense;—Sarah's paragon of perfection would not go so far as that;—her own fancy was leading her into an abyss; she must take care and not destroy people's characters with her jealous inventions. Dr. Campbell naturally made himself at home with old friends whom he had known for many years; how could he make so free in an earl's house to which he had been introduced but six months ago? He had been probably sitting on the rug playing with a child, and when it was taken away had indolently remained there, looking through Tennyson. She had often sat on the carpet herself tossing over a volume that she had pulled out of the bottom shelf of a bookcase.

In the midst of her efforts to comfort herself she dropped asleep. She dreamt that she was sitting on the grass in Ashcombe Churchyard, and that Dr. Campbell was lying on the ground with his head in her lap. Suddenly she saw a snake winding about amidst the rich masses of his hair. She attempted to take it out,

but he put up his hand convulsively, as if to prevent her she called out to him that he was in danger, but he made no answer. She thought he looked deadly white; she put her hand on his cheek,—it was colder than snow: the shock made her start up; she saw the summer sun's early beams piercing under the blinds of her window; she tried to recall the memories of the past day; to survey the prospects of that which was approaching. She thought of the visit,—of Campbell's devotion to Mrs. Davenport, and his disregard of her, except as a great person to whom he should be punctiliously polite, and her heart died within her. She was confused about what was to come on to-day;—oh! yes; Sarah was to go home, and she herself was to be left to her own reflections, and to the enjoyment of the luxuries of Sans Souci. Heavens! what a mockery there seemed in that title! How every-one strove to torture her! How much better it was when places were called by truthful, honest names, very likely to express an occasional mood of the human mind, and, accordingly, to show a kind of dumb sympathy with it. "The Devil's Glen," "The Traitor's Leap," "Il Lago d' Averno," "Mount Erebus," "Mount Terror,"—there was some comfort in these appellations; they matched the kind of world it was our doom to live in.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE DOCTOR AND THE RECTOR OF ASHCOMBE CHURCH.

"This is the gentleman I told your ladyship
Had come with me before, but that his mistress
Did hold his eyes locked in her crystal looks—
Nay sure I think she holds them prisoners still."

SHAKESPEARE.

MRS. DAVENPORT was now quite well, and Dr. Campbell had commenced a period of voluntary exile from the Vicarage for about ten days or so.

The fact was, Mr. Warner had actually come from Sussex to visit his daughter, having heard of her accident from Davenport, who honestly wrote him a whole account of it. So he wished to satisfy himself by a personal inspection that she was quite right again. Of all people on earth Campbell detested Mr. Warner: he laid to his charge all the sins he had ever committed since he was driven from his father's hearth; he had cauterized the fountain of his heart's blood, and sent him desolate, hopeless, aimless, alone on the billows of a tempestuous world, to be buffeted, tempted, overlooked, without that blessed haven to fix his eye on which was to be the reward of all his toil. If that tyrant had left him the dove that his God had prepared for him, he would have been nestling in its breast for the last seven years, sinless, useful, happy. Now what was he? A solitary man,

without a home, without an object on which he could lavish an honest, free, devoted love in the face of all the world. His idol, the gift of his Maker to him, was called another man's wife, considered herself such, and must be treated accordingly; he himself must be ashamed of his holiest feeling, and must consider the slightest demonstration of it as no better than a crime. Mr. Warner had converted the highest sentiment man can entertain—a single and ever-enduring attachment to a perfect woman—into a base encroachment on a brother's rights, a perplexing disturbance of a wife's most sacred duties. It was easy to say, let him get a wife for himself, and create a little home around him. The affections could not be marshalled like guardsmen, called off from one station, posted at another, and be in full readiness, when the rout came, to quit Mrs. Jenkins, and take up their quarters with Miss Jones. No wonder he hated Mr. Warner and shunned him as he would a hungry boa-constrictor.

Mr. Warner, on his part, was very well inclined to make friends with Campbell. He had received most gratifying accounts of his attention to the family on every occasion, from Mr. Davenport, and he felt greatly obliged to him for his devotion to his grandchildren. He knew he had settled at Northwood before Amelia went there, so there could have been nothing concerted between them in that respect,—though it was odd that they should be thrown together again; but he had no fear of him now, he had of course forgotten his boyish fancy, or had changed it into a friendship that seemed very valuable. So he begged of his son-in-law to ask him to dine, which was done immediately, but without success. Campbell declared he had nearly affronted the Abbey family by his neglect, and he must try and make up for it by doubling his attentions for some time to come; Miss

Neville had asked him repeatedly to Sunville, and he was engaged to dine there to-morrow, with sundry other excuses, which Milly understood very well, but which much vexed poor Davenport, who thought it very ungracious of him that he would not come to meet his father's old friend; but his wife settled it as usual by,—"Arthur, dear, excuse him, he is not like other people;" and, as she was not offended at his slighting her father, the husband considered it no business of his to be so. Mr. Warner, on hearing of his refusal, suspected he had still some lurking grudge against him, and spoke of him no more.

So Dr. Campbell had time enough to devote to the two young ladies, who, totally unknown each to the other, seemed to be vying with one another who should soonest sow the wind and reap the whirlwind.

He first went to Northwood Abbey, and sat for a good while with Lady Caroline; the gentlemen were out, and she had him entirely to herself. He had the usual sweet, gentle, reserved manner which always distinguished him when in her house; he was the same man who had attended her all the winter—but different, oh! very different, from the person she had met at the Vicarage. However, she would not think of that day—it was ecstasy to have him near her again, conversing with herself alone; safe from Mr. Davenport's troublesome brats; far from Mr. Davenport's beautiful, conceited wife. When he rose to go she reminded him of the pedestrian excursion he was engaged to take with her and the Misses Bolton; he was to name the day when he would be free; as to the ladies they were always at leisure. The Misses Bolton and their brothers, or one at least, were to come to breakfast at the Abbey on whatever morning he could join them:—

"So," she said in conclusion, "do just let us know, as

soon as you are able, when they can spare you from the Vicarage."

He did not like to have it thought that he lived at the Vicarage.

"Oh, I don't go there now," answered he; "Mrs. Davenport is well."

These few words shot an intense joy through her heart. Things were all coming right again; she had been making herself miserable for nothing. He readily named the following Thursday for the walk; it would be a great matter if he could manage to have some engagement for every day during Mr. Warner's stay; it would stop Davenport's teasing.

The day after this visit he went to dine at Sunville. The Routledges, Mr. James, Major and Mrs. Smyth (whose inquiries for her foot had exasperated Miss Neville so much), and some other gentlemen in the neighbourhood, were invited to meet him. He made it a point to be as civil and affable as possible; the idea that he had been rude and unkind to Miss Neville still haunted him, and they, so far from resenting it, had given him a fee three times as large as he had a right to expect, so he was particularly anxious to be agreeable on this occasion, and he succeeded to perfection. He was remarkably attentive to Miss Neville—every one noticed it. He conversed with her in a little private *tête-à-tête* for half an hour during the evening, and gave her the names of three books which she was to read in succession, to obtain a good knowledge of the history of modern Europe; he consented to sing the moment he was asked; he avoided mournful ditties; he sang a playful song from the Spanish in exquisite style; in fact, it was no other than that in Mr. Lockhart's collection, beginning with:—

"Since for kissing thee, Minguillo,
My mother scolds me all the day."

and it is impossible to describe the delicacy and archness which his manner threw into this little piece, which, even when simply read, strikes us as one of the most naïve, sly, happy trifles that was ever produced. When he came to the concluding verse :—

> " Out upon you, false Minguillo !
> One you give, but two you take ;
> Give me back the two, my darling—
> Give them,—for my mother's sake !"

A particular kind of half smile lurked about his mouth, and those to whom the song was new received the unexpected finale with a perfect burst of admiration. A shout of " Encore !" came from every gentleman in the room ; the delicate, sensitive man coloured ; they were treating him like a public singer. Mrs. Routledge, who was near him, understood his feeling directly.

" No, no," she said, " only once."

He smiled, shook hands with her, and retired to a seat.

The whole company acknowledged to themselves that he was a perfect gentleman, and a most fascinating man. As to Miss Neville—how shall we describe her feelings ? As usual, she thought she had on former occasions admired him as much as it was possible for her to do ; but he was this evening so superior to anything he had been before, that it was no wonder new emotions still more powerful shook her whole frame. When would he culminate ? When would he reach his climax and appear before her in full glory ? Would he then slay her with his brightness, like Zeus, or draw her into himself and raise her to his own level ?

The hero of the evening was the first to withdraw. When he was gone, several persons who had known him for the last six years or so crowded round the heiresses. A shower of congratulations commenced.

"Well, ladies, you have wrought a most miraculous change in this doctor of ours," said one.

"I did not think him capable of being so agreeable," said another.

"I know him these seven years and I never heard him sing a good song before," said a gentleman who was quite of Captain Lewis's creed in that respect.

"I think," said Mr. James, "that if he wished to play the part of Minguillo, he would find plenty of ladies very anxious 'to please their mother,' and to insist on getting back their property."

"Let any lady who differs from Mr. James hold up her hand—the ayes have it! ha, ha, ha!" said Major Smyth, who was so far self-supporting that he kept himself in constant roars of laughter at his own wit, and gave his hosts no trouble in entertaining him.

"He seems to be very well acquainted with all kinds of literature," remarked a gentleman who had read but little himself; "though I am sure he kept it all closely bottled up until to-night; for my part, I thought he knew nothing but those medical books."

In short, several of Dr. Campbell's friends seemed to have made acquaintance with him this evening for the first time.

"See the magical power of the fair sex," cried Mr. Routledge, waving his hand as he approached to take a share in the discussion.

"Humph! only a certain portion of the fair sex," muttered a man with two elderly daughters at home, who, having been setting their caps at Campbell for the last five years, had now subsided into quiet resignation.

"Joking apart," said Mr. Routledge, patting Mary Neville on the back, as she happened to be close to him "we really have great occasion to be thankful to you, for giving us an opportunity of seeing that this man *can* be

pleasant, and lively, and obliging, and can sing a merry song; I, for one, won't let him sulk any more."

"Oh! I declare," answered she, "I renounce all claim to having the least share in the metamorphosis; if such has taken place, Alicia deserves all the credit of it."

"You need not say that, Maria," interrupted Miss Neville, "you have just as many attractions as I have."

"Only in one point are your attractions equal, my queen," whispered Mr. Routledge to Miss Neville, whom he liked infinitely better than he did Maria, "and that is a point that no one can take into his consideration when those blue eyes are raised up to him."

She coloured and turned quickly away from him; and he was afraid she was displeased with him for speaking thus in reference to Campbell, whom he considered as really quite beneath her notice.

"I suspect," whispered the father of the two spinsters to Major Smyth, "that we are as much indebted to the champagne and claret that flowed so abundantly this evening, as to anything else, for the fit of agreeability that this stiff doctor got into."

"No such thing;" said the Major; "I sat by him and I can vouch for him that he took one glass of sherry, and not another drop of anything."

"More fool he!" rejoined the other; "indeed, they all said at home long ago that he was a poor spooney."

When Miss Neville went to her dressing-room that night, she sat down in her arm-chair, and began to reflect. That some wonderful change for the better had come over Dr. Campbell, everyone in the room had noticed: it could be no fancy on her part; what could be the cause of it? something in her house certainly that was not to be found elsewhere. He had been particularly attentive to herself that evening, and had done everything he thought would please her;—Mr. Routledge must have noticed something, by the

way in which he spoke; he was quite ready to agree with Maria that she had no part in effecting the remarkable improvement, and in fact he had hinted to herself that her individual attractions could account for everything; and Mr. Routledge knew Campbell long and well, and was a very good judge of the kind of persons that pleased him, besides being a very shrewd observer of mankind in general. And thus for the first time under the dominion of the same terrible passion that was transforming her unconscious rival into a mean and bitter censor, the haughty heiress who had coldly dismissed from her train men of high birth, talent, commanding station, wealth and power, set herself nervously to calculate her chances of having pleased a "dispensary doctor," with the same anxiety and doubt that might be expected to agitate a governess on whom it had suddenly dawned that she was perhaps becoming agreeable to "one of the young gentlemen of the family."

Finally she worked herself up to a state of delighted certainty. But still there is nothing like the testimony of another party in addition to our own. She dismissed her maid, and went to her room-door and called out, "Letty Cope, are you in bed?"

"Oh dear, no!" answered she, mincingly; "I am standing in the window this quarter of an hour admiring the moon."

"Then leave the moon to herself and come here." Miss Cope came directly. It must be noticed that this lady had now fully discovered the state of Miss Neville's heart, and was determined to act in the manner which she judged would be most acceptable to her patroness.

"Dr. Campbell was greatly excited to-night: don't you think so?" began Miss Neville.

"No, not excited; something deeper than that;—I should not call him an excitable person," answered Cope.

"Well, he was very different from what he was when he was attending me."

"Oh, certainly; he feels himself more an equal when he comes as a guest, than as a professional man. Poor fellow! I hope he will not rue the day he first came here."

"He is our equal in every situation," said Miss Neville sharply; "and what do you mean by 'something deeper,' and by saying you hope he won't rue the day he ever came here?"

"Oh, nothing, only——"

"Only what, Letty Cope? do you dare to trifle with me?"

"I mean, that if he comes too much here, he might remember, when it is too late, the great difference between his position and yours."

"I take for granted you mean fortune by position; and what matter is a difference of fortune when everything else is equal, and when there is ample provision for both on one side?"

"If that is your opinion," said Miss Cope, "I'm sure I am not ashamed to confess it is mine too; but you know one thinks one ought to speak according to the rules of society."

"You know, Letty Cope, that I am no conventionalist; tell me instantly what you think about his feelings."

After a little hesitation she answered:—

"I think that if you do not wish to make him happy, you ought to avoid making him miserable, and to cease encouraging him to come here."

And the artful toady, considering she had said quite enough, hurried out of the room.

Miss Neville went to bed in a state of extreme excitement; every one was discovering it; in fact she herself was the only one inclined to doubt it. He was ready to

ask her, it was evident, if he could only indulge in the slightest hope of acceptance. We must leave her planning various ways of supplying him with that hope, without compromising her dignity.

Dr. Campbell, weary with exertions to which he was unaccustomed, and for which he had no taste, was glad to get back to his humble cottage and his faithful old servant, who always met him on his return at night with a cordial greeting and a basin of posset, or whey, or whatever she thought most suitable for him "after that cold ride," which was her invariable expression, whether it was summer or winter. He drank a little to please her, and then went up to his room, opened the back window and looked across the town towards the Vicarage on the hill. There was still light in one window, but it was not Milly's: no; she was comfortably asleep in her bed, and Davenport of course by her side. Well, why should he not? it was better to have him a good husband, than a bad one. It would not improve matters certainly if he was at this moment crowing on the bridge of Henry-street, or rollicking along River-street, chucking the girls under the chin, and treating the lads to beer:—Milly at home sitting up for him, with blanched cheek and dim and weary eyes. The light was in the window of the best bedroom, so it was probably Mr. Warner who was up still; why would not the old villain go to bed? it was not his conscience that was keeping him awake; very lightly it sat on him that he had had his (Campbell's) happiness in his hands, and that he had dashed it against the stones. But he would leave it all to the Nemesis who would come sooner or later; he was convinced of that. Alas! she was coming with steady pace, nearer and nearer; prepared with one blow to punish every delinquent. At last the light vanished, and it was to be hoped the victim might take a little rest too: he threw himself down on his narrow French bed and his

hard mattress, neither knowing nor caring that north and south of his cottage two hearts lapped in luxury and bedded in down were throbbing and breaking for him.

Thursday morning arrived, and Dr. Campbell prepared himself, at an early hour, to go to breakfast at the Abbey, and attend Lady Caroline and her friends to Blackheath Castle. It was really not worth seeing; a rough broken fragment of a tower on the top of a bleak hill; but he had told her a little legend connected with it, and she had asked him to take her to see it, glad of any excuse to spend a summer's day walking through the fields and woods with him for her companion. The earl's coach was sent early in the morning to Laburnum Lodge, to fetch to breakfast as many of the Boltons as wished to come. Lady Caroline had particularly specified Lucy, whom she was anxious to have to spend a day with her, as the poor little girl had not been at the Abbey since the family came there, and Caroline knew she would be much amused by all the beauties of nature and art that were collected there, though to herself they were so wearisome and tasteless. Edmund, who had been at the Abbey much oftener than George, agreed to stay at home and have an eye to his father, and look in on some poor people, who were at present the only patients on his master's list. So Sarah, Lucy, and George, the two latter in high spirits, got into the coach, and were quickly whirled to Lord Northwood's stately habitation. George gave Lucy strict injunctions not to betray her rawness and ignorance by noisy expressions of wonder and admiration, but to enjoy everything in the silence of her own heart;—which she promised faithfully to do.

When they arrived, they found Campbell already come, and the Northwood family all assembled in the breakfast parlour. The earl was in excellent spirits; he was overjoyed at the great improvement in his daughter,

about whom he had been miserable since the day she visited at the Vicarage; but now she seemed to have imbibed new life as she stood in the window chatting to Campbell. It was impossible for a man of the earl's quickness to fail in perceiving that her happiness, and her health too, depended on the presence of that man; and it struck him also, as a very possible occurrence, that she might end in saying that she was determined to marry him. This dread, unexpressed to any one, had taken forcible possession of him, and he was already beginning to debate in his mind how he should act under such perplexing circumstances. He also very naturally apprehended that Campbell, encouraged by her marked attentions, might secretly entangle her in an engagement, and the only way to prevent this would be to banish him instantly from the house;—but that would certainly kill his child; he was puzzled and distracted, and, in his inability to fix on any safe course, allowed things to run on in their usual channel.

Lady Caroline was in great spirits at breakfast; she placed Campbell beside her, and made him assist her in filling out coffee; joking him all the time about what she called his awkwardness, meaning, in reality, to direct the attention of the company to the grace and alacrity with which he fulfilled her every behest. She forgot, for the time, that the Davenport family existed; she was a person ever ready to bid away from her memory any troublesome recollections or unpalatable facts; she had been so accustomed to have every desire gratified, and everything painful immediately removed, that she considered the occupancy of her mind by such rude and tormenting visitors as we have named amounted almost to an absurdity; she had never been worried in her life,—was not made to be worried;—there must be a mistake somewhere;—the thought could not be endured

that anything destructive of her hopes and wishes had happened, or was to happen; a report that she did not like must be a lie;—an unwelcome object that struck her senses was to be attributed half to fancy, and half to bad sight; and thus, instead of looking troubles in the face like a brave soul, and schooling her heart to bear them, she pettishly turned away from them, as if they were malicious spectres, that only required the proper exorcism to make them glide in disgrace to their loathsome den. This was a disposition as far removed on one side from cheerful resignation, as it was on the other from the single-mindedness that "thinketh no evil;" but yet this feeble cowardice was not a primary element in her nature; it was, like many other of her defects, the fatal result of her wrong education.

Lucy was so awed by the rank of her hosts, and so amazed at the splendour she saw about her, that she could not open her lips; she wondered how Sarah could have borne so well to return to a metal teapot, a glass cream jug, and a brown tea-urn, after the glitter of plate and china that she had revelled in for three weeks at the Abbey: she did not know how she herself would ever be able to eat the breakfast, which she thought imperative on all rational beings, of tea and bread and butter, after partaking of cold chicken, cold tongue, and that delightful thing—potted fish, she believed—that was served up in beautiful little china boxes, that she would have thought were meant for chimney-ornaments: she would be in a sad way soon, if Lord Fitzarthur did not cease offering her this and that, for of course she could not say "No" to a "Lord"; she was astonished that her sister and Dr. Campbell did not look frightened; as to the latter, he was as much at his ease as if he was Lord Northwood's son, and had been living in that style all his life;—she was very happy to see George holding his tongue, and

not plaguing and quizzing every one, and she wished he was oftener kept in order by the presence of "lords." She trusted she had herself done everything "*comme il faut*;" it was a mercy she had stopped herself in time, for she reflected, with horror, that she had been on the point of saying "Sir" to the magnificent footman.

When the repast was over they prepared to set out on their walk; Lady Caroline asked her brother whether he would be of the party, but he declined—rather stiffly, she thought; he had business elsewhere; she did not require his attendance, she was "so well *beau'd* already." He said this bitterly; in fact he was provoked at seeing an intimacy with Campbell renewed; he had noticed, long before his father had done, the change that took place in his sister the moment "this man" made his appearance; neither her cottage, nor Miss Bolton, nor anything except him, satisfied her; active steps must be taken to put a stop to the whole business; and the affairs which, he had pleaded, called him elsewhere, ended in an hour's solitary walk up and down the shrubbery, during which, he meditated various plans for saving his sister from a "miserable," "degrading," and very probably "most unhappy *match*."

Meantime Lady Caroline, Dr. Campbell, and the three Boltons, set out on their excursion. Their way lay at first by the public road, in an opposite direction from Ashcombe Church, on towards the northern end of Mr. Purdon's parish. The scenery as they advanced became more interesting; they turned into some corn-fields and meadows, and, crossing a few stiles, arrived at a wood which covered the side of a long steep hill, at the base of which ran a broad walk—or rather a perfect colonnade of beeches, and limes, and elms, which, joining their branches overhead, formed a long beautiful arch, the perspective of which had a fine effect. On the right of this walk stretched the corn-fields and meadows, basking in the sun, which,

not yet near the meridian, shot slanting lines of light across the path, wherever the massive trunks of the trees would permit them to enter.

"Why, this is charming!" cried George, as they plunged into the umbrageous avenue. "It was well worth coming to see, even if we did not expect the little further treat of a heap of grey old stones that your ladyship has promised us at the end of our journey."

"Oh, now you need not be so smart," said she, laughing; "it is a very ancient ruin, and any trifle is valuable that leads people to make little simple parties for wandering about among the beauties of nature without ceremony. I propose that we all say whatever comes into our heads."

"Exactly as if we were in Madame de Genlis's Palace of Truth, eh?" said Campbell, looking at her searchingly, as it seemed to her.

What did he mean? She blushed scarlet; she fancied he had discovered her feelings with regard to himself, for she was always suspecting, hoping, fearing something connected with her lamentable passion. George noticed her distress, it surprised him, and he thought it only right to come to her rescue.

"You seem a little afraid of that rule, Dr. Campbell; if it was enforced you might be obliged to disclose mysteries that would amaze us."

He spoke at random, but Campbell bit his lips, frowned, and looked deeply annoyed. There are very few persons indeed, to whom the Palace of Truth is an agreeable joke. Sarah endeavoured to turn the laugh against her brother.

"George, you just now very rudely anticipated Lady Caroline's proposal that we should say anything that came into our heads, by speaking in the most disrespectful terms of the old ruin she is going to show us; if that is your mode of talking in this unenchanted wood, it would

be rather fearful to meet you in a place where you could put no check on yourself."

"Quite the contrary, I can assure you, young lady," answered he; "I will venture to say that I have not a thought in my head which I would not be ready, if required, to lay before my friends or the public without the least apprehension that I should awaken a feeling in any way injurious to myself."

And he looked through his clear honest blue eyes at Caroline and Campbell, with an expression of candour which they might well have envied.

"However, Lady Caroline," he added, "if I was rude to you, I beg your pardon."

"Not in the least," she cried; "do not speak of it."

While they were thus conversing, Lady Caroline, looking on, saw at a distance advancing torwards them under the archway of the trees, a tall stately man in black, wearing a long-tailed coat and a shovel hat.

"How well that far-off figure looks!" exclaimed she to Campbell, "there was nothing wanting to complete the landscape but a figure exactly at that distance: you know we are all too close together for any one to be viewed advantageously by the others."

She had been taught drawing well, and surveyed nature rather artistically.

"Too close together!" repeated Campbell, with his arch smile; "I am sorry you think so."

She laughed and looked delighted.

"Is this your first sentiment in the Palace of Truth? if so, it is an admirable beginning, and likely to disappoint the anticipations of some of our friends. But is that gentleman an acquaintance of ours? I am short-sighted."

Campbell looked up. His smile died off directly.

"It is some clergyman," he answered, curtly.

"Some clergyman!" cried George; "it is Mr. Purdon;

I am surprised you do not know him; I thought you were the most far-sighted of us all."

Campbell made no reply, but looked on the ground.

On came the rector of Ashcombe Church, graceful and dignified, with his "*nova canities*," his "*prima et recta senectus*;"—enough, and too much perhaps, still remained to Lachesis to twine; he needed not the "*bacillum*," but under his right arm he carried an umbrella, while his left hand held a polyglott Bible with silver clasps. When he reached them he raised his hat to Lady Caroline.

"Happy to see your ladyship; you have a fine day for your walk."

He saluted the Boltons, and was passing on, when he suddenly spied Dr. Campbell.

"Ha, Campbell!" he exclaimed, in a cordial and familiar tone, quite unlike his previous manner. He kindly extended his hand.

Sarah shot a glance towards the two as they advanced to meet one another. Mr. Purdon's face was lighted by a gentle smile; Campbell looked up, frankly enough she thought, into the eyes of his rector; he received the proffered hand, wrung it, but kept his lips closely compressed together, and never a word he spoke. The rector walked on.

Lady Caroline stood still, and looked after him; and you may look after him, too, reader, if you choose, for you shall not have a nearer acquaintance with him; probably you do not deserve it. The servant of God, sincere (whatever we may think of his opinions), hard-working, self-sacrificing,—in Ireland obeyed like a prophet, and consulted like an oracle,—in Italy and Spain canonized,—in England, because he is linked with the state, and recognised by the law, may be patronised by the church-going nobility and gentry, but by the mass of the people is held scarcely above scorn,—far below respect.

We can understand the sceptic who, rejecting certain creeds as false, looks disapprovingly and disdainfully on the men who teach and propagate them; but in what class shall we range those into whose heavy minds a doubt never entered, but yet who make a by-word of his name who advocates what they do not deny to be the truth, who speak with irony and ridicule of one whom they acknowledge to be the organ through which salvation is conveyed to their souls, when they bring their children to the baptismal font, and solicit the last sacrament for a dying relative?

Lady Caroline continued to gaze until a bend in the path concealed Mr. Purdon from her view. She then turned round and walked slowly on by Campbell's side.

"How I do grieve for that poor man!" she exclaimed. Then, as if a thought struck her, she said quickly to him: "you were here, were you not, when he lost his only child? I suppose you attended her;—was it consumption?—do tell me what she died of."

"Of an inflammation in her bowels," answered he, seeming determined, when ladies chose to ask questions of this kind, to give them full satisfaction.

"Oh, yes," cried the giddy, thoughtless Lucy, "that is what people say; but Mrs. Miller thinks what she really died of was——"

"Well, upon my word, Miss Lucy," interrupted Campbell desperately, "it appears to me very hard that when the physician who attended her, broadly states her disease, the opinion of an old woman should be quoted in correction of his."

He grew redder and redder every word he said, but when he had finished, the blood ebbed back to his heart, and left his cheek just the colour of "cream-laid" paper. He then rushed into the wood, followed by his dog (who, we forgot to mention, made one of the party); and

scrambling up a steep path, overgrown with briony and blackberry brambles, he was soon lost amidst the underwood and scrub. Poor Lucy was astounded by the rebuke she had received; Lady Caroline looked after Campbell in dismay; George coloured and bit his lips; and Sarah stood petrified.

George was the first to speak, and opened a volley on Lucy. "I am astonished at you, Lucy! Thoughtless and unfeeling as you are" (she was far from unfeeling), "I could not have supposed you would have had the courage,—for it required incredible courage,—to attack a physician for want of skill in his profession, and to set up the judgment of your nurse in opposition to his!"

Lucy burst into tears.

"I did not mean a bit of all that, George——"

"No, no," said Lady Caroline, whose natural disposition broke out when she was not prevented by jealousy; "that is too strong; she meant nothing of the kind; she merely was rash in expressing herself; very young people do not consider qualifications; they are generally led by the opinion of those who are around them, and old servants assume a most oracular tone."

"You are kind in excusing her," said Sarah; "she is neither so foolish nor so audacious as she seems, but her great error lies in encouraging that servant so much, and in believing implicitly everything she says; but still I hardly expected she would have introduced her as an authority on such an occasion as this; no wonder Dr. Campbell is angry, but I hope he will consider her youth and ignorance. I must arrange things on a better plan at home. I cannot express how vexed I am."

"I heartily wish I had not asked him anything about Miss Purdon!" said Caroline.

"It would have been better if you had not," said Sarah,

but you were not aware;—it was a painful business;—she went off so suddenly, and he was rather young then, and had the whole responsibility on himself,—no other help could arrive in time;—and she was such a loss! I do not say he was ever blamed, but still he could not feel otherwise than very wretched for a good while. He has now recovered himself, of course; at the same time people do not speak of her to him."

"Nor should I, I am sure, if I had known so much; but no one ever tells *me* anything," said Caroline, pettishly. "I suppose," she continued, "that he is as much displeased with me as he is with Lucy; do you think he will come back again to-day?" and she looked anxiously up into the wood for some trace of him.

"I am convinced he will soon return," said George; "it would be very traitorous of him to run away in this wild place; at the same time be assured I am equal to any emergency that could occur. We had better walk on slowly."

They did so.

"Come, dry your eyes, Lucy," said Sarah; "I don't think it would adjust matters much to have him find you crying when he rejoins us."

She did so, saying to George,—

"And am I to apologise to him when he comes back? Oh, dear! what shall I say?"

"Say nothing at all," answered he; "your wisest course is, not to make your presence known for the rest of the walk."

Here Troubadour suddenly bounded out of an opening in the trees, and frolicked up to them. "Ah, poor dear dog," cried Caroline, "where have you been?" and she gave an anxious look in the direction whence the animal came, expecting the master to follow. "Come, you charming creature, let us have a race;" and she ran on,

holding him by the collar, and glancing rapidly on either side.

"She seems very fond of dogs," observed George, smiling.

"She is not a bit fond of dogs," said Sarah, drily. "When I was at the Abbey she hunted Lord Fitzarthur's pretty setter out of the breakfast-room every morning, though she knew it was a great pleasure to him to have it near him then, and to make it catch pieces of toast in its mouth."

"You are not fond of dogs, either," said he; "you will not allow us one at home, and yet you seem partial to this setter."

"I am not at all partial to it," rejoined she, haughtily, "but I think Lady Caroline owes her brother a little more than the permission to have his dog for half-an-hour in the breakfast-room every day."

"I fancy I can understand the sort of pleasure she feels at the return of Troubadour," said George, smiling again. "None of us like thunder, exactly; but after a long drought we are very glad to hear a clap; we think it the precursor of rain!"

Sarah made no remark on this. They were alone together for the present; Caroline was a good way before them, bent on her object of finding "the lost Pleiad;" Lucy was lagging behind, blowing her nose, and pulling down her green veil, and wishing heartily that Dr. Campbell would never stop climbing and running until he reached his cottage, where he would be safe from attacking people, and spoiling their day's amusement. After a pause George said to Sarah:—

"I think that was a very unwarrantable assault Campbell made on Lucy."

"You seldom take her part," answered Sarah, "and

I should never have supposed you would take it now, particularly after having spoken so severely to her."

"I am not taking *her* part, I am taking my own; he trespassed on my province; it was my duty to check and reprimand my sister when she spoke foolishly, and I was just going to do it when he burst forth."

"But you were not in time," said she, with a half smile; "in a second more she would have rattled out with the disease, and that was what he was determined she should not do,—and who can blame him? I am greatly ashamed of her; my comfort for the day is spoiled."

"And mine too; but tell me, Sarah, have you made any guess as to what disease she was going to name?"

"Not the slightest; and I am sure I will not ask either her or Mrs. Miller; and I will forbid Lucy ever mentioning Miss Purdon again to anyone, or talking to Mrs. Miller about her; and I think we all had much better let the subject go to sleep for the future; we shall not learn anything more satisfactory about it by questioning gossips and scandalmongers; and ignorance on the point is perhaps the most desirable state for us to be in."

"Why, Sarah, one would think you suspected Dr. Campbell of poisoning the girl, you have such a strange look in your face," answered he.

"No; I have not the least suspicion of that," said she.

They spoke no more, for they had now nearly overtaken Lady Caroline, who, tired of running, was sauntering slowly with Troubadour by her side. George was just going to say something cheerful to her when he perceived Dr. Campbell standing on a sort of fence, composed of turf and stones, and topped by an old thorn tree. It was about six feet above the pathway, but he reached the ground with a light spring and ran up to Lady Caroline.

He held a bunch of wild flowers in his hand, and appeared quite himself again.

"I have been gathering these for you," said he to her; "not that I mean to tease you with a lesson on botany to-day, but still you might like them; are not they pretty? Ha! traitor" (to his dog), "and so you ran away from me! but I cannot blame you when I see whom you preferred to me."

How enchanting the vision of him had appeared to her as he stood erect by the old thorn! How winning was his look now, and how charming the sound of his voice, as he uttered these friendly flattering words! Sarah, even, could not help admiring him and thinking that though there was a mistake somewhere or another, yet nature seemed to have designed him for forming the happiness of some woman.

They walked on chatting, but with an awkward feeling on all sides, and soon reached the old ruin. It did not take much time to examine it, for there was very little remaining. They then sat down under its walls to partake of the luncheon which the housekeeper had sent on in a donkey-car. It was a regular gipsying party; they spread their dishes, plates, decanters, and glasses on the green turf, and ranged themselves on the ground beside them. This was just what Caroline enjoyed,—it was so simple and new to her; perhaps it was the happiest day of her life. The scene in the wood seemed forgotten now; Campbell sat close to her on the grass; there was a boyishness and a self-forgetfulness about him that she had never seen in him before, except on that hateful day at the Vicarage. He appeared determined to make up, as much as possible, for the unfortunate schism that had scattered them all about after Lucy's unlucky speech, and he succeeded to perfection; the charm of his conversation made time and place be forgotten. Lucy was

very meek and silent at luncheon, and ate scarcely anything; in fact she was nearly choking with shame and vexation.

Lady Caroline would have remained where she was until twilight, ay, and from twilight until dark, had not Sarah given a hint about damp,—another long walk before them,—the earl's uneasiness,—and all those marplots that crush enjoyment at its greatest height.

"Indeed I think, Sarah," said George, finishing a glass of sherry, the best he had ever tasted, "you might leave it to Lady Caroline to propose the breaking up of our party; as to the ground" (passing his hand over the short grass), "it is as dry as Gideon could have wished it on his first experiment. Lady Caroline, you have not appointed a Thaliarchus as is usual on such occasions; pray name me, and I will undertake to arrange the terms of the feast quite to your satisfaction."

"I am sure I don't know what Thaliarchus means," answered she, "but I will be happy to appoint you anything that will insure the continuance of our charming pic-nic for half-an-hour longer." And she began to think George a much pleasanter person than Sarah on an expedition of this kind.

"You may depend on me," said George; "'Fly not yet' is invariably my motto on these delighful occasions."

"Oh, then I dub you Thaliarchus instantly;—for I suppose it is something connected with knighthood,—which I am too ignorant to understand."

So saying she struck him playfully on the shoulder with her parasol.

"I humbly thank your ladyship, and I would kneel before you as I ought, only the ground slopes so much in front of you that I fear I might roll down the hill and disgrace my new-made dignity. I suppose this is called Blackheath Hill from the total absence of that material."

"It was probably covered with heath when it was first so called," observed Campbell; "but was cleared in the progress of civilization; can't you read a little history in names?"

"It is stony enough as yet," said George, "and rather reserved in opening its bosom to the ploughshare; but look at that rich valley below us!"

"Yes," said Campbell, "we are in a very good situation for surveying it; there is the triumph of agriculture! See, Lady Caroline, how those soft, rich colours succeed one another in some cases and form a lively contrast; in other instances they melt into one another—various shades of green, yellow, olive, brown—every stage of maturity until the crowning month shall fling the last sheaf into our overflowing bosoms."

She lifted up her eyes, but they paused on his face, and did not travel on to the landscape which he so much admired.

"Truly," said George, filling his glass, "it is perfectly magnificent! Much as I value the gifts of Bacchus, I declare without hesitation that I think Triptolemus (the person who taught men the use of the plough, ladies), was the greatest benefactor the world ever saw."

"Away with your Bacchusses and your Triptolemusses!" cried Campbell; "why should we be always falling back on Greek fables? I say that the greatest benefactors man ever saw were the cherubim and the flaming sword that barred him from his dreamy and inactive Eden, and sent him forth into the wide world, making him know and feel that he was a progressive animal—that he must hew his way through the 'thorns and thistles,' which a kind after-thought had placed in it—that his brain must invent, his sagacity discover, his judgment direct, and his arm execute, before his soul could really enjoy. We may admire the imagination of the Greeks, but young

people cling too long to their fables, quoting them constantly as if they were facts. According to them, every step a man took he trod, as it were, on some spring, that straightway threw up before him a picture of everything he was to do in his progress towards civilization. Come, Mr. Thaliarchus! has your term of office expired yet? If not I must supersede you in my capacity of Health Preserver, and beg of the ladies to rise from the grass, and set out on their return home."

Lady Caroline jumped up as soon as Campbell expressed his wish, and the lad in attendance began to pack his little cart, while the pedestrians commenced retracing their steps.

"Well," said George, as they tripped along, "I think we agreed that the highly cultivated valley we have just left behind us is the finest physical sight on earth; now, what is the finest moral one? a great man struggling against adversity—eh, Dr. Campbell?"

"No," answered Campbell, "nor a great man coming to relieve him either, although Goldsmith thinks the latter the sublimest sight of all. The grandest moral picture is exhibited where we see the most sacred object of nature completely fulfilled; that is, when we see two hearts, perfectly concordant in every thought and wish, indissolubly united; leaning on one another, aiding one another, encouraging one another in the battle of life, with a love that neither time nor death can quench; with a double power of doing good in their generation,—but as far as regards themselves, with only one heart, one soul, and one existence."

Lady Caroline and Sarah both started; not even the latter had ever before heard him allude to anything connected with love:—but how beautifully he spoke when he did speak of it! Oh, what a husband that man

would make to any one who could completely match him in every shade of her character!

Caroline timidly lifted her eyes to glance at a face which she thought must, in uttering these sentiments, have a divine expression. But very human it looked, indeed, in its beauty, for it looked very sad; there even seemed to be tears in the dark eyes, but he appeared to bid them back quickly to their fount when she looked at him, for his cheek remained dry, and he gazed thoughtfully on the ground. What was his history? Did he care for any one? Had he been disappointed in any one? She supposed she should never know.

George was a capital addition to a party where matters had a tendency to become too sentimental.

"You pitch your pipe so high, sir, that I fear if we were to wait for such a blessed unanimity of tastes and feelings as you describe, we should remain old bachelors all our lives."

"I was not 'pitching my pipe' at all," answered Campbell, half disgusted; "I was answering your question of what I thought the finest moral sight on earth, and I persist in saying it is what I have described; that such instances are very rare is not to be wondered at, though it may be lamented; I should be very absurd if I advised people not to marry until they could realize such a state; I suppose I may do as I like myself."

So he had expressed himself pretty plainly at last! He was determined not to unite himself to any one who did not realize his ideal of a true partner, and could she flatter herself she was such? Surely not. She turned very pale. Campbell noticed it, and cried:—

"Oh, I am afraid you are tired! will you sit down on this bank, it is pretty flat?"

"I am not tired, indeed," said she, striving to rally; "if we delay now we shall be late for dinner."

"Come, then, sir knight of the parasol," said Campbell, tapping George on the back, "why do not you offer your arm to your liege lady, and support her during the remainder of the walk?"

Well, that was cool! How ready he was to accommodate her with George's arm, but he took care not to give her his own! He seemed resolved there should be always a gap between them;—or perhaps he was jealous that she had made George her knight, or her thaliarchus,—whatever it meant,—little she cared. She wished young Bolton and his hard words far enough; if the two girls and she had no one but Campbell for their escort, they would have been much happier. Meantime George eagerly presented his arm, hoping her ladyship would accept of his poor support. She could not decline, agreeing fully with him in her own mind that his support was very poor indeed, compared with what she might have had if he was at Laburnum Lodge.

Campbell was acting in what he thought the most delicate and judicious manner; he guessed Lady Caroline would not object to lean on George,—scarcely more than a boy—and the son of her father's old friend; and he himself was thereby enabled to act as squire to the Miss Boltons, who, if he had left them to the polite attentions of their brother, would probably have concluded their walk unsupported. So he said, when he saw Lady Caroline very comfortable, as he thought:—

"Now I will take the Miss Boltons, if they will honour me."

Lucy hung back, frightened.

"Do, Miss Lucy," said he kindly, "you must be tired, too."

She laid her fingers timidly on his right arm, Sarah took the other, and in this order they all made their appearance on the avenue of Northwood Abbey. Lord Fitzarthur was

standing on the steps, watching for them. A gleam of satisfaction came over his face when he saw his sister was leaning on George, and not on Campbell. He ran to meet them.

"I am most happy to see the son and daughter of the two old friends on such pleasant terms with another;" and he smiled very benignly on both.

George was delighted; Lord Fitzarthur had never been so gracious to him before; it is hard to tell what he augured from that speech. If people would consider it, there is nothing so unjust, and yet nothing so common, as to excite hopes and emotions in the breast of one person, either for the purpose of subduing and crushing them in that of another, or because we are elated that things are not so bad as we expected. If Fitzarthur had known how little idea Campbell had of his sister, he would have been supremely indifferent which she was leaning on, the arm of Mr. Bolton's son or the dispensary doctor.

After dinner, Caroline kindly showed Lucy everything she thought would amuse her and make her quite forget the scene in the wood; and when tea was over, the coach was in attendance to take home the Boltons, and Campbell returned on horseback to Cypress Cottage.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE DOCTOR AND THE INDIAN.

"She stood a moment as the Pythoness
Stands on her tripos, agonized, and full
Of inspiration gather'd from distress,
When all the heart-strings, like wild horses, pull
The heart asunder." BYRON.

"Lo, how hollow the fiend speaks within him!"
SHAKESPEARE.

AT his breakfast the next morning, Dr. Campbell consulted with himself (the poor fellow never had any one else to consult with) how he should spend the day, in order to avoid a visit from Mr. Davenport, and an importunate request to go and dine with him, and meet Mr. Warner. So he settled that as soon as he gave some directions to Edmund Bolton about his day's employment, he would ride off and visit the Routledges first, and then the Nevilles, and that he would stay and dine with whichever family might happen to give him an invitation. So having left Edmund and the skeleton in close communion, he proceeded to Holly Park, and being told that both ladies and gentlemen were out, he went on to Sunville, where he found not only all the Nevilles in the drawing-room, but Mrs. Routledge and her two daughters also paying a morning visit. He made himself very agreeable, walked for an hour about the grounds with the four young ladies,

and after handing the Routledges into their carriage, instead of setting off in hot haste to keep an appointment with some importunate patient, which Miss Neville had made up her mind that he was to do,—he walked quietly back to the drawing-room and began to read a book:—there was no danger that old Warner would bolt in here, or Davenport assail him with unwelcome hospitality.

Miss Neville's heart bounded within her when she saw him making himself at home; she immediately asked him to stay and dine, to the displeasure of Maria, who commenced a studied apology for her sister's rather thoughtless request;—she was sure Alicia was forgetting they had no gentlemen to sit with him after dinner; it was really unfair to tax him with such an evening as he was likely to spend;—alone with four ladies! But he stopped her by saying, that nothing would give him greater pleasure;—and so we shall now leave Miss Neville in the seventh heaven (it is a comfort to be able to leave any one happy, for ever so short a time), with Dr. Campbell reading out Childe Harold to her, in his unrivalled voice and manner.

Poor Lady Caroline in the mean time had returned to her usual solitude, and subsided into her usual despondency. She spent the forenoon alone in her cottage; Fitzarthur was gone four miles off to look at a horse—a famous hunter, he heard. It is a great relief to ladies that gentlemen must go now and then "to look at a horse," when they are inclined to give them more of their society than is quite agreeable. She was rejoiced to be alone this morning; she wished to brood over the events of the day before, uninterrupted by books and conversation for which she had no *goût*. If Fitzarthur was with her she could not discuss yesterday's walk, for the key-note of her strain should be hushed; she must avoid speaking of Dr. Campbell. So the presence of her brother was becoming oppressive to her; that brother whom she had

loved so fondly,—her companion from infancy,—the last scion with herself of their long and proud line. Out upon Love! plunging, hacking, hewing through strong solid old affections, to build on their ruins a glittering fabric of his own that one ungenial breath may scatter to the four points, leaving it very doubtful whether the former precious edifice can ever be rebuilt on the same conditions as before.

The more she thought upon what had transpired yesterday respecting Miss Purdon's death, the more her curiosity was excited to learn something further about that young lady. She had noticed that Sarah's manner was constrained and mysterious in telling her the little she did. Was Dr. Campbell blamed for her death? or had he been attached to her, and was he so blighted and prostrated by her sudden loss, and under his own care too, that he had no heart for a new engagement—was incapable of feeling a second love?

This suspicion made her miserable; she racked her brain to find out some one to whom she might apply for further information; for as to Sarah, she felt it would be useless to put any more searching questions to her, and with whom else of her acquaintances was she on such familiar terms as to attempt to interrogate them on a subject so delicate? Chance facilitated matters for her far sooner than she could have ventured to hope.

That night, when Elpsley was assisting her to undress, the waiting-maid began to complain of Sabina, the Swiss girl;—she was grown idle, saucy, unmanageable, and far too fond of the head-gardener's company.

"I am convinced of it!" cried Lady Caroline. "I must get rid of her; but it is so hard to meet with people in this country who want such a person. I suppose Gordon has not heard of any one yet. I know she is grown quite too much for me, and every one must allow I

do all in my power for her, and still she continues to elude me. On Sunday last I took her to church on the seat behind the carriage with the footman, and I thought she was coming in directly after me, but she never made her appearance until the end of the first lesson! and I quite forgot when we came home to ask her where on earth she vanished to."

"Oh, my lady, I think I know what became of her. I heard her telling the coachman that day at dinner that she had seen Miss Purdon's grave at last, but that she was a long time before she could find it; so I suppose she went in search of it instead of following your ladyship into church."

"And why was she so anxious to see Miss Purdon's grave?"

"Why, my lady, people talk a great deal about her death,—'tis a good while ago, but when strangers like our servants come to the country, and ask—Has his reverence no family?—they shake their heads and say he had a fine lassie, and it was hard he should lose her in such a manner."

"And what manner do they say he lost her in?" asked Lady Caroline, anxiously.

"Why, my lady, you've heard, I suppose, of that old nurse, Mrs. Ford, who lives in the pretty cottage on the hill opposite to the church hill."

"Yes, I have."

"Well, she went there, say of a Monday, in perfect health, and found the old woman very ill, as the story goes, and stayed all night to nurse her, and would not go home till her father went on Tuesday afternoon and compelled her to come away; and as soon as she got home she took to her bed, and died at twelve at night—of a cold, they say, that she got sitting up all night,—but nobody knows what ailed her. Dr. Campbell attended her.

"I know, I know; and does not any one say for certain what she died of?"

"They could find out nothing, my lady, for the doctor drove every servant out of the room, and sent off for that old woman, who, bad as she was, it seems was able to go; and the two attended her till she was no more, and would let no one else in to her. The people say it was a great shame there was no inquest, but the doctor settled everything; indeed, 'tis reported he and the old woman told no end of lies to her father about her."

"You had better take care what language you use, Elpsley," cried Lady Caroline, indignantly; "how dare you say coolly that Dr. Campbell told a number of lies to Mr. Purdon? How can you presume to take away a gentleman's character in that manner?"

"My lady, I humbly beg your pardon. I don't say such a thing myself; I was telling your ladyship the reports that were going; of course I don't believe them; he seems a most honourable gentleman, and must be calumniated; and he was nearly killed by it himself,—he looked like death for a year after it happened. Shall I put on your ladyship's night-wrapper?"

"Wait a moment. Does Mrs. Ford herself ever speak of Miss Purdon?"

"Not that I know, my lady; but she encourages the report that it was by sitting up with her that the young lady came by her death; and at any rate they say she is broken-hearted by the business altogether."

"Is she bed-ridden?"

"Oh, no, my lady; and as far as money matters go, she is very comfortable; Mr. Purdon gives her a pension, and she sits in her little parlour, and all the young ladies visit her and read to her; Miss Bolton attends her."

Caroline, having dismissed the waiting-maid, settled that she would endeavour to find out some excuse for

visiting Mrs. Ford too, in order to glean, if possible, something more satisfactory about this mysterious affair.

The next day her father informed her that he and Lord Fitzarthur were going to some distance on business, and as they were not to be home till rather late, she might dine whenever she pleased. She considered this a most fortunate incident; she would dine at two, and take a quiet walk to Mrs. Ford's cottage in the cool of the day, and be home in the evening before the return of the gentlemen. She considered she could give a very good reason to the old lady for doing her this unexpected honour. She would take with her a written description of Sabina's various qualifications, and request Mrs. Ford to inquire among the ladies who called on her whether any of them required a servant of that kind. Finally, to render her visit completely acceptable, she ordered a basket to be packed with wine, fowl, and pastry, as a treat for the old woman.

About three o'clock she commenced her walk, attended by a little boy carrying the basket. She never had set her foot on the road before without a gentleman; a week ago she would not have believed any one who had told her she would do such a thing, but now, so intense was her desire to find out whether any mysterious connection had subsisted between Dr. Campbell and Miss Purdon,—aught that might deaden any inclination in him to form other ties,—that she would have despised a much greater objection than the chance of lowering her dignity by wandering along the highway unattended. Her loneliness was what affected her most, but she recollected that Sarah Bolton walked out constantly without any companion, and was never molested in the slightest degree. So she gave no orders to any person to come for her; indeed she did not exactly wish the domestics to know whither she was going; Elpsley might laugh at her, or suspect

something, on learning that she had posted off to Mrs. Ford directly after hearing the facts she had communicated to her.

Having arrived at the cottage-door, she ordered the boy to lay down the basket, and paid him liberally, telling him at the same time, that if he tattled to any one about where he had been, she would never employ him again. She knocked as timidly as if she was a houseless girl coming to solicit alms or shelter, instead of an earl's daughter bearing a handsome present. The door was opened by Nannie Ford herself, and, seeing a simply attired young woman (for Lady Caroline had carefully avoided everything rich or showy on this occasion), with a large basket on the step beside her, she thought her a traveller who wished to rest a little, or desired a glass of water, so she said, quietly:—

"Well, dear?"

Lady Caroline answered:—

"I am Lord Northwood's daughter, not a distant neighbour of yours. I have heard a good deal of you from Miss Bolton, and I wish to visit you as she does; so I have come and brought you some wine, and a few other little offerings, in this basket."

The poor woman's countenance and manner underwent a total transformation.

"Oh, your ladyship! what an honour! Will you ever excuse my stupidity? My sight is bad, and I never heard the carriage; is there no one attending your ladyship?" and she looked up and down the road.

"I like a nice walk in the afternoon," said Caroline, "so I came on foot, and a boy brought the basket; come, take it in, and I will follow."

Nannie carried it into the parlour, then hastily drew an arm-chair and placed a screen behind it, as if there

could be any wind from the door in July, and begged of her ladyship to sit down and rest.

"What a sweet little cottage you have!" said Caroline, "and such pretty flowers too! I can add very little to your enjoyments in that way." And she handed her a splendid bouquet, that she had culled herself in the garden and greenhouse.

"Oh, my lady, you are too good! what a love of a nosegay! This will be something to surprise my lady-visitor next Monday."

"Come, then, while you are putting the flowers in water, we will chat. Does a lady visit you every week?"

"Yes, my lady; sometimes one, and sometimes another; my darling Miss Bolton is my favourite; is not she a friend of your ladyship?"

"Yes; I am very fond of her."

"Ah, she is a kind, sensible, feeling young woman; and she reads and explains so nicely to me."

"And does any one besides the ladies visit you?"

"Yes, my lady; the doctor who attended your ladyship is very attentive and kind to me,—oh! I am afraid this little room is too hot for your ladyship; shall I open the window?"

"Perhaps you had better," said Caroline, turning away her head; "does Mr. Purdon call often? You are his parishioner, I know."

"Yes, I am his parishioner, my lady; and, besides, I was nurse in the family for many a year; and my daughter, who is dead, wet-nursed his child; and he is *so* good to me! oh, *so* good! I owe him all I have; this house, and many a comfort besides."

Caroline was come to the point she so much desired.

"The child your daughter nursed was, I suppose, the young lady who died so suddenly," said she.

"Yes, dear; he had no other;—oh, pardon me, my

lady! I had the presumption to say 'dear' to you! I'm so forgetful now;—that's what I say to good Miss Bolton."

"Oh, do say 'dear' to me!" cried Caroline; "you can't think how sweet it sounds. I never hear a woman say a loving word to me; my mamma is dead, and my nurse is dead, and I am sad and lonely enough sometimes, Mrs. Ford."

"God comfort us all, my darling lady! there is sure to be some drawback in every situation. I think I should be very happy now if I had my poor child with me, instead of struggling on here by myself. Still—she is at rest; her life was not very happy; her husband was rough and cross enough sometimes;—his name is Higgin, he farms a few acres on the Miss Nevilles' estate."

Caroline did not want to know his name, nor where he lived; she little dreamt of the part he was to play in her destiny. At present she hastened to cut short the old woman's garrulity by a very home question.

"Mr. Purdon seems to have suffered a loss similar to yours, but the death of his only child was dreadfully sudden, was it not? What did she die of?"

Nannie started, and was silent for a moment; she then said, slowly:—

"Honoured lady, she died by the visitation of God."

"We all die by the will of God, of course," said Caroline, "but there are what the learned call secondary causes, and I thought you might have known what the complaint was; perhaps it was some very unusual one."

"Indeed, my lady, if you were to ask the doctor himself who attended her, he would tell you nothing more than that it was something——brought on by a cold."

"Why should I ask him?" said Caroline, looking confused; "but, as we sat here together, I thought I

would just talk to you about her;—I take such interest in poor Mr. Purdon."

Nannie fancied her ladyship looked dissatisfied, and supposing she had heard the usual report, and was vexed with her for endeavouring to evade any reference to it, she said at once:—

"You have probably heard, my lady, that I am blamed for the illness that caused her death;—that she got cold sitting up with me;—yes, the world blames me, and I bear it;—I know I must; but, at any rate, no misconduct, no selfishness has ever been laid at my door; I never wished her to come to me, and—Heaven knows—I was frightfully uncomfortable during the time she stayed. While they say I am the cause, they allow I am the innocent one, and that is some comfort to me; we can endure anything better than the consciousness of having committed sin."

"Very true," said Caroline, and she was commencing some words of sympathy, but Nannie interrupted her.

"Pardon me, my lady, but my poor case is not worthy of so much attention, when you consider the blow that fell upon her saintly father, and that fine warm-hearted young man—"

"What young man?" cried Caroline, hysterically, and not able to check herself.

Nannie looked surprised.

"I mean Mr. Livingstone, my dear."

"Mr. Livingstone! who is he?"

"Oh! I thought your ladyship had heard;—he was her cousin,—sister's son to Mr. Purdon, and she was engaged to be married to him from the time they were children."

A weight was lifted off Caroline's heart; she could scarcely suppress her delight.

"Oh my dear Mrs. Ford! I never heard that be-

fore." Then, calming herself, and assuming a look of concern :—

"Really that makes it ten times as melancholy, for I suppose he is broken-hearted also."

"He is beyond suffering, my lady; he never returned here after her death, but died himself abroad some time ago."

"How sad! and were they greatly attached?"

"Why there was much more love on his side than on hers; for she was but young when they parted, and he went to India, and she to school; she looked on him much as a brother; but he had a deep, wild love for her, I never saw the like of it, from the time he was a little boy; and his uncle was always telling him she was to be his wife, and sure enough he never forgot it."

"And was she very pretty?"

"Yes, my lady, prettier than a fairy; and such wild, laughing, shining eyes, they always looked as if they had been just created, fresh from God's hand, and not yet darkened by a tear; you'd think the hardest use they had been ever put to was to look at a rainbow;—ah! I'm a poor attempt at describing, my lady."

"Indeed you have given me an excellent idea of her eyes;—and her other features?"

"Oh, her mouth was rich, and full, and moist, like red currants, and dinted about with dimples, and her cheeks were round and soft,—and such a bright red! and her hair tumbling all about them in loose long locks. And her neck, and arms, and all her flesh were so smooth and firm, and plump and cool. She was small, but beautifully proportioned—a little model, you'd say;—but I'm only spoiling her trying to describe her; how could I give your ladyship the expression of her face?—and I loved her so! When my daughter had to go home sick, I took her place, and attended the dear child from the time she was a year

old until she went to school. She was wilder than a squirrel, and could climb just like one. I kept her out in the air all day, and it made her so strong and healthy, she looked like a ripe cherry. Master Julius resided at the Rectory then, and went to a day-school at Northwood every morning. Then after breakfast I went with Miss Annie to the Hill of Cones (you can look down into it from the opposite side of the road, my lady), and I took her luncheon in a basket, and she bounded about among the trees, and caught butterflies for her museum; and I did a bit of needlework under the shade, until the time arrived for Master Julius to be coming from school, and then we began to watch for him until he came in sight, moving slowly on the road below us, and his eyes fixed on the side of the hill where he expected we would be; and when he saw us, or her, I should say, he would dash himself off the pony and let it go loose wherever it chose, and skipping across the stepping-stones and up the side of the hill he was soon by her side kissing her, and saying, 'What shall I do for you?' and she would say—'Bring me down that branch up there,' pointing to the very highest branch on the top of the tallest tree. 'To be sure I will,' he'd say, pulling off his jacket;—but my lady, I declare to you, while he was preparing to go up, she would have the tree half climbed herself, and when he reached the top, there she'd be before him with the branch plucked off, waving it and flapping it in his face, and laughing, just like a shower of music; then they'd sit together there halfway up to the skies, chirping and calling to one another just like birds. And there was I below, a poor terrified creature, beseeching of them to come down, but then they'd laugh twice as much and pelt me with cones. I was obliged to tell the dear gentleman that I must give up the management of them, but he only said:—'Let them be, Nannie, let them be; if God did not watch over his

little flock, there would be scores of children killed every day.' He was that easy, trusting, kind of man;—too easy, he was not fit to manage that little girl; and she came from France, prettier and wilder than ever, but not half so innocent; with such queer notions—and so flirty, and no one to check her."

"And did she wish to marry her cousin when she returned?" asked Caroline.

"I'm not sure she did, but—"

"Perhaps she saw some one else subsequently that she liked better," interrupted Caroline, anxiously.

"I was not going to say that, my lady," answered Nannie nervously, "but that, however she felt, she was not prepared to disobey her papa in that respect, for he had his heart set on it, and quiet as he was, she was afraid of him when Mr. Julius was in question, so they would have been surely married only she was otherwise provided for: it seems a hard lot, but she might have had a harder if she had lived. Mr. Julius loved and hated with equal violence, and he was very jealous; and if she had gone on flirting or *cocketing* with other young men after her marriage,—I shudder when I think what might have been the consequence to herself and them both. I would not have the assurance to call in question the wisdom of my betters; but, my lady, it seems a bad plan to engage children to one another without knowing whether they will both be agreeable to it when they are big."

"I quite agree with you," said Caroline; "the affections should not be dictated to, nor controlled either, if people have their hearts set on one another."

"Just so;" said Nannie; then as if thinking aloud, "she might be alive now if she had been let alone to choose for herself."

"Eh! what's the meaning of that?" cried Caroline.

Nannie started.

"Oh! my lady, I beg your pardon; what I meant was to tell you an anecdote of Master Julius. Don't mind what I said last—pray don't. As I was saying, 'tis a great doubt what kind of husband he would have made, he was awfully vindictive, and not in the common way either.

"One day Master Chester, a young gentleman who lived near us, was playing with him in the garden, and in the course of the play said something very insulting to him; so I was going to run off for the gardener to separate them in time, before Master Julius should, as I thought, kick the other to death; but instead of that he looked at him very steadily for a minute with his grand, dark blue eyes; but there was an expression in them I shall never forget; then he took off his cap and bowed to him, saying —what's this, he said?—two French words—I'm sure I thought I should remember them and the look for ever—the look kept the words in my mind though I did not understand them;—oh yes: he said 'Au revoir,' and walked into the house. So I said, 'Heaven be praised, Master Julius is learning to curb his temper!' and Master Chester said, 'Old goose! Livingstone is a coward.' One of us was as right as the other.

"Now there was going to be a splendid fête at the house of a neighbouring squire in honour of his son's coming of age; every one had been looking forward to it for months; there were to be tents on the lawn, and a military band, and great dancing, and splendid fireworks. The Chester family were to be there of course, and my master and his nephew; Miss Anne was too young to go. Well, the day before the fête Master Julius walked off to Chester-town without telling any one, and sent in for Master Chester, and when he got him on the lawn he gave him a most dreadful beating and left him senseless on the grass, without any appearance of an eye in his head. Home he

came, and walked up to the nursery, and there was not so much as a drop of perspiration on his forehead. 'Nannie,' said he, 'Chester won't be at the fête to-morrow; I've done for him. He'll be in bed and the surgeon stuping him. Now wasn't it better to wait till the right time? If I had drubbed him the day he called me the name, he'd be well by this time, and as gay as a parrot at the entertainment to-morrow. There is nothing like thought and coolness.' 'The coolness of Satan, sir,' said I. Then came a note from Mr. Chester to Mr. Purdon complaining that his nephew had half-killed his son, and so master told Master Julius that he should stay at home and not go to the fête, and he said nothing until his uncle had left the room, and then he began to laugh, saying:—'Nannie, he thinks I am greatly grieved at being kept at home, as if any fête on earth could give me a tenth of the joy I feel at seeing my vengeance so complete, so telling, so artistic:'—was not that last an odd word for a boy of thirteen?"

"Yes, indeed," said Caroline; "other boys would have said 'jolly.'"

"Oh, he never used 'jolly,' nor 'stunning,' nor any other vulgar boys' words. He was always reading high-flown books, and he used to study every religion more than his own—God forgive him!—he said his own was not sublime, and that he would 'turn Turk,' or something else that I forget the name of."

"I doubt his uncle flogged him enough," observed Caroline.

"Oh! my lady," answered she, shaking her head, "*he* could never be beaten—once he was, and the doctor had to be sent for, and there was fine work, and the doctor told master that he must be flogged no more, for if he was, he would either die in convulsions, or stab whoever beat him. But any punishment that he did not look on

as a degradation he bore like a lamb. But if ever he found out he was any way wronged—oh good God! I thank thee that he is in his grave."

"Upon my word, I don't agree with you," cried Caroline, with animation; "it would be a great comfort to poor Mr. Purdon to have even him left; he was not wicked to people he loved; certainly his uncle would be happier if he had him; after having been the cause (unintentional, I know), of the daughter's death—why are you thankful that he has lost the nephew too?"

Her words sounded harsh, but she was provoked with Nannie for her observation, or rather her avowed gratitude on the death of young Livingstone. On hearing these words from the lips of Lady Caroline, Nannie turned exceedingly white and continued mute for a few minutes. Then, as if she had made up her mind about something, she rose slowly from her seat, drew herself up to her full height, laid one arm on the chimney-piece, and held the other aloft to give emphasis to her words. She spoke in the measured and hollow tone of the Pythoness.

"Long have I suffered, much have I borne, and I will endure to the end without betraying those who trusted me. I accuse no one, I reveal no secret, I but perform a duty I have many years owed to myself. Lady Caroline Fitzarthur! it was NOT in attending upon me that Miss Purdon spent her last night on earth. Nor nurse nor physician performed any office for *me* that night; I needed none, I was well; better than I shall ever be again for the remainder of my life."

She sank down on a chair, put her hand to her heart, and seemed to breathe with much difficulty.

Lady Caroline was thunderstruck at her words and terrified by the ghastly hue of her cheek, but before she could offer her any assistance, the outer door of the house was rudely opened, and the next instant the parlour door

flew back until the surbase behind resounded with the blow it received, and a countryman rushed in and threw himself on the first chair he met, which happened to be directly behind the screen that Nannie had placed at the back of Lady Caroline's seat, and accordingly her person was quite concealed from his view.

"Mother," he cried, not regarding the pallid looks and fainting condition of Mrs. Ford,—"mother, 'tis, as usual, the very opposite of what we expected; he has refused to say a single word in my favour, and Miss Neville won't give the situation to any one that does not bring a recommendation from some gentleman she knows; and Lee is sure to get it, for Mr. James has written a most handsome letter for him, and will speak for him besides when he dines at Sunville to-morrow, and now 'tis too late for me to do anything more, but if I had known in time that *he* would have refused, I could have applied to another gentleman who would have written for me in a minute, but I'd sooner have had a character from *him*,—she'd take his man before a hundred others; for the truth is, mother, she loves the ground he treads on, and all the people say she is going to marry him; the servants will have it's certain: yesterday he spent the whole day at Sunville, and they were walking, and talking, and planning together, and he showed her a sheltered bank that he said would do nicely for a grass garden for autumn flowers, and there were two men set to work to make it to-day. I don't grudge him his luck, if it does turn out luck, but it would not be much trouble to him to do that good turn for me; he is beginning to take me very easy of late, just as if he was safer now than he was the first night:—I know if there is any mischief brewing for him, damn me if I'll throw down a spade to go and help him."

He paused. Lady Caroline had been listening to the whole harangue motionless in her chair; his violent man-

ner and loud voice had stunned her at first, and then some suspicions that arose in her mind respecting the person who had not been named made her continue deeply silent and attentive until he stopped, when she could no longer bear her suspense, but starting from her seat she stood erect before him, crying :—

"Tell me, I entreat of you, what is the name of the gentleman who has, as you think, treated you ill?"

Higgin shrank back aghast, as if the White Lady of Avenel had suddenly walked out of the wall. He could only stammer :—

"Madam! madam!"

But Mrs. Ford had now pretty well recovered herself, and said to him in bitter vexation :—

"Thomas! how can you make this noise and row, and here is Lady Caroline Fitzarthur, who has done me the honour of coming to see me, and you insult and agitate her with your miserable affairs? I'm sure, my lady, I'm ready to die with shame."

"Hush, hush!" said Caroline; "you know he did not see me, and therefore is not to be blamed. Tell me, my good man, of whom were you speaking?"

He looked confounded, for he had often heard Dr. Campbell was a great favourite at the Abbey.

"My lady!—I beg your pardon most humbly;—such an honour—what I never could have expected,—and that screen—" was all he could get out.

"Answer her ladyship directly the question she has condescended to ask you," said Nannie, sternly, to her son-in-law.

He spoke, looking on the ground like a culprit.

"The doctor, my lady, that lives in Northwood; indeed he has been always a very kind friend to me, so I was a little surprised at his refusing to ask Miss Neville to appoint me her gamekeeper, but I dare say he has good

reasons for not wishing to do it,—only just, in my disappointment I spoke angrily—" and so he went on, unheeded by her; little she cared whether he refused, and what were his reasons; one dull sound rang in her ears like a knell.

"She loves the ground he treads on"— "They were walking, and talking, and consulting together"— yes; like engaged persons; making their little arrangements about their joint property. She trembled exceedingly, and dropped into her chair.

Higgin, finding she had stopped questioning him, was glad to make his escape to the kitchen, which was opposite to the parlour. Lady Caroline sat motionless and speechless for some time. Miss Purdon—Nannie's last remarkable words just before Higgin burst in—the approaching darkness—everything was forgotten in the horrible all-engrossing idea that he was going to be married to Miss Neville!

Mrs. Ford perceived at length that there was something very particular the matter with her, and she said, with great anxiety:—

"My lady, I am greatly afraid that outlandish man has frightened you sadly! Dear, dear! how unfortunate I am that such a thing should happen just the day you honoured me—"

"No, no; he has not frightened me at all; I'm half tired; pray give me a glass of water."

Nannie entreated of her to take some wine in preference, and she consented, feeling that she would otherwise have scarcely strength to walk home. When she had finished it she looked out of the window.

"Oh dear, Mrs. Ford! it is almost dark; what shall I do?"

"Don't you expect the carriage, my lady?" asked Nannie, surprised.

"No, no; I said nothing about it; I intended to walk back by daylight; I hate driving; but it is too dark to go alone now; I don't know what to do."

"My dear lady, I will send Thomas Higgin off to the Abbey immediately for the carriage, and it will soon be here."

"Oh, no," she cried, more anxious than ever to get home before her father and brother, and conceal her misery in bed; "I could not bear to make such a rout; let me see,—I must walk;—I suppose your son-in-law is trustworthy?"

"Oh, true as steel, my lady! though forbidding at first; not polished like your own servants, but, I'd say, safer. He would die to defend your ladyship if required,—but is it possible you would rather walk home with him than order the carriage?"

"I assure you I would; say no more of the carriage, call him; no, wait; I was forgetting;" and she then mentioned her desire to get Sabina a place, and, giving Mrs. Ford the written description of the girl, she requested of her to inquire among her lady visitors whether any of them would wish for her. The more miserable she was, the more desirous she became to get the charge of this impetuous young foreigner off her hands.

Nannie promised to do her best, and added that she had heard Higgin mentioning that the Miss Nevilles were looking out for a foreign waiting-maid.

The name made her shudder; but she thanked Mrs. Ford, and desired Higgin to be summoned, who forthwith arrived, full of gratitude for the honour done him and so forth. Lady Caroline took a kind leave of Nannie, and departed, under these to her most singular circumstances. It was now pretty dark, but the evening was very beautiful, and a soft perfume of many trees rose from the Hill of Cones that stretched down into the valley on their left.

On the gentle hill at the other side of the glen, the church and churchyard were dimly visible, where the wild and wayward young beauty had so early found the goal of her joyous career. Caroline thought—Oh, that she herself were there too! What had she to live for? Every day her life was growing more insufferable, her lot assuming a darker hue.

But would she wish to die, and leave Campbell in the arms of Miss Neville? Horrible thought! She prayed that the sigh that rent her heart might break his too, and that they might both lie down to rest together by the side of the rector's child. Higgin walked behind her, at a respectful distance. She looked back and called to him:

"If you do not keep close to me, any one I may meet will think I am alone."

He came near, with zealous alacrity, eager to do whatever she pronounced most desirable.

"I understand the Miss Nevilles are looking out for a Swiss waiting-maid."

"Yes, my lady; the housekeeper told me so."

"I have one who will, I think, answer for them, and if you will negotiate I shall feel obliged. Mrs. Ford will give you every information, and you can communicate with the housekeeper."

"I shall be proud to do so, my lady."

After a pause, she said, with a desperate attempt at a careless manner, while her voice sounded strangely hoarse and unnatural:—

"Which of the Miss Nevilles is going to be married?"

"Your ladyship! I don't know that either of them is."

She stammered out:—

"But I heard,—you said something to your mother,—perhaps——"

"My lady! I will never forgive myself for the way I went on in your noble presence! I was in a passion;—I

expect I took things by the wrong end; now I'm all right, and I don't believe everything servants say; I know I talked of some report—but they're always reporting;—I'm sure neither of the young ladies is going to be married in this country."

She saw there would be no use in cross-examining him, for that he was determined to unsay every syllable he had said when unconscious that he had any listener but Mrs. Ford. Besides, her high feelings conquered her anxiety to extract further information on a point where the little she had learned was obtained entirely against his wish, and stealthily as it were on her part. And yet it was marvellous the pleasure his last words gave her, though she must have felt they did not proceed from his heart. Ay; she was already beginning to bid the hideous phantom away from her as a lying and impertinent intruder, the rude disturber of her silken dreams; and, contrary to the suggestions of reason and common sense, she inclined rather to believe what he said studiously and advisedly for her especial ear, than what he had let fall in the full flow of domestic confidence. After all, she thought, it was not likely he was going to be married without Miss Bolton or any one in the neighbourhood hearing of it; Sarah would have been one of the first to find it out through her brother Edmund; oh yes, precisely; Dr. Campbell told his pupil everything, and he would tell his sister, and she was just the person who would give her (Caroline) notice of it, as a little caution,—for she was glad to lay hold of this straw now, and admit to herself what she had proudly rejected before—that Sarah had discovered the state of her heart. Besides, if he was in love with Miss Neville it was not likely that he would be so perfectly happy in the company of Mrs. Davenport, and so engrossed with her and her children;—thus flying for relief and comfort to the

woman who, in consequence of Campbell's devotion to her, had been previously a cause of jealousy and wrath.

During these reflections she suddenly, in the dusk, nearly struck against a man, who, not looking before him either, was coming in the opposite direction. Both started back, and she made a faint exclamation, for the person was no other than Campbell himself.

"Lady Caroline Fitzarthur!" he exclaimed; "can I believe it? For heaven's sake why are you walking on the road at this time of night, and who is this?—Higgin!" looking at her attendant.

She told him, as clearly as her agitation would permit, what led to his finding her in this situation.

"Excuse my interference," said he, "but I think it was very injudicious of you to object to Higgin's going for the carriage; what in the world do you think your father will say?"

"Oh, he is gone on a distant excursion, and I may be home before him."

"Don't flatter yourself; I went this afternoon to vaccinate the child of a farmer who lives a little beyond the Abbey, and when I was passing your gate your father and brother were riding in; I spoke a few words to them."

"Oh, what shall I do?" she cried; "papa is frightened to death, and will be so angry."

"The only remedy now," said he, "is to hasten home as fast as possible; you have but about a quarter of a mile to go;—permit me to attend you; it is most improper that you should be out at such an hour with only this man."

He said these words in a low voice, and then turned to Higgin:—

"You may go back to Mrs. Ford's cottage, and I will undertake to leave Lady Caroline safe at the Abbey."

The man made no answer, but stood doggedly, waiting to hear what her ladyship's pleasure might be. She thanked him very affably, and told him she would spare him any further trouble. He bowed and departed.

Campbell gave Lady Caroline his arm, and they proceeded. She was trembling violently.

"Don't be so frightened," said he, kindly; "your father is not very implacable."

"I think more of my brother," said she.

"I trust we shall be able to appease him, too," returned Campbell.

But it was neither the dread of her father's displeasure, nor of her brother's wrath, that was disturbing her; the sole thought that shook her was,—on whose arm was she now resting? Was it on that of Miss Neville's betrothed, or on an arm that might yet be hers for ever, to defend, to support, to encircle her? At one moment she clung to his side trustingly, lovingly, adoringly;—at the next instant she felt impelled to fling him away, and bid him not mock her with his politeness, not insult her with his frigid encouragement, not be her guide and protector to-night, and to-morrow be less than an old acquaintance.

He, on his part, felt annoyed at her having commenced visiting Mrs. Ford, and was determined to put a stop to it.

"What could have made it come into your head to go to see that old woman?" he asked.

"I hear all the ladies about visit her, and I wish to be like other people, and do as much good as I can," she answered.

"Oh! those ladies form a knot called 'district visitors,' and it is their duty accordingly to call at the cottages of the lower orders; but you do not belong to their clique."

"No, but I think I am bound to be charitable to the poor, though I am not a member of a society."

"I assure you Mrs. Ford is not an object of charity; she is most comfortably provided for. I could point out many poor creatures near your own gate who need your generosity much more than she does."

"I will attend to any recommendation of yours with the greatest pleasure," she rejoined, "but Mrs. Ford is very lonely; there is charity in comforting words, where alms are unnecessary."

Campbell frowned.

"She is a great talker, and talking is not good for her either; she has a heart complaint, and you are too nervous to be alone with her; she may die very suddenly; you had better not go there any more; you see how she has kept you this evening, and brought you into an exceedingly disagreeable predicament, I must say."

"Indeed it was my own fault; but if you think it altogether better that I should cease visiting her, I will."

He was going to say something, when, the moon having risen, he was startled by seeing the Indian at a distance advancing to meet them. Suddenly he made a dead pause and eyed them both; then putting himself in motion again he darted rapidly forward, and, stopping short once more when he came within a yard of their faces, he planted himself firmly opposite to them, and seemed disposed to impede their further progress. Campbell moved a little to the left in order to pass him by, but he moved instantly in the same direction, and still stood right in their way.

"This is strange conduct, sir," said Campbell, "please let us pass."

"What! another!" exclaimed the Indian, looking from Campbell to Lady Caroline; "what! another!"

"I believe he is not in his senses," whispered Caroline, terrified; "what shall we do?"

"Mad or not mad," cried he, "he shall not block up the road in this insolent manner! Go out of the way immediately, sir!" and he lifted up his cane.

"I would advise you not to strike me," said the Indian, with a look that might well have been borrowed from the cobra de capella.

It seemed to have a powerful effect on Campbell, for he dropped his cane and stood still for a moment, with his eyes fixed on his adversary, who, in his turn, looked steadily at him, and so, for a few seconds, they remained silent and face to face. The Indian was the first to speak: he said contemptuously to Campbell:—

"Depart whithersoever you please, for the present, but let go this unfortunate young woman directly. Come, lady, with me, and I will conduct you safe to your father's house."

"Oh, no!" she cried, "why should I leave him? I cannot have a safer protector than he is. I don't doubt your honour, sir" (for she was greatly afraid of him), "but why should I thus offend this gentleman, who has kindly undertaken to see me home."

"Yes; and no doubt he will bring his undertakings to a glorious issue," sneered the Indian. Then to Campbell; "Unhand that lady instantly, villain!" and he endeavoured to wrest Lady Caroline from her companion's arm. She screamed. "Why do you fear me?" he said to her upbraidingly: "I offer you safety; I see that man as you cannot see him; I know him as you know him not. You see there a beautiful human being, but I behold Siva, with the lion's skin round his loins; Siva, with the deadly serpent looking over his shoulder; Siva, with his collar of bones, and ONE SKULL hanging about his neck for a locket."

Campbell turned as pale as ashes.

"By heaven," he said, almost choking, "if you do not

desist instantaneously from your raving jargon, and let us pass on, I will strike you dead."

And he endeavoured to force his way on, dragging Lady Caroline with him, while she said, in the most imploring manner, to the Indian, who was still grasping her hand :—

"I beseech you, sir, delay me no longer: I am sure you mean well, but I am perfectly safe with this gentleman; perhaps you do not know who he is,—I would go with him to prison and to death!"

"And to dishonour!" said the Indian, slowly; "yes; such are women. Heaven help you!" He gave a deep sigh.

"You know not what you are saying!" she shrieked; but Campbell said :—

"Hush! Lady Caroline, leave him to me;" then to the Indian, "You shall answer to me another time for this language, at present,—drop this lady's hand!" and with a sudden jerk he freed her and was hurrying on, when the Indian, after fumbling in his bosom for an instant, made a sudden and rapid descent on Campbell, exclaiming,—

"I have a message from God unto thee!"

Campbell, with an instinctive sense of danger, bounded back a few steps, disengaging himself from Lady Caroline by the movement. She was immediately grasped by the Indian.

"Come with me! Where do you wish to go? If you cannot walk I will carry you."

But before she could answer, or Campbell attempt to rescue her, a man sprang over a stile that was at the side of the road, and rushing into the midst of them cried :—

"Good God, Caroline!"

"Oh, my brother!" she murmured, and fell upon the neck of Lord Fitzarthur.

Campbell and the Indian both drew back, and left her to her natural protector.

He paused for a few moments, and then cast a suspicious glance on the two as they stood, in conscious innocence, prepared to answer any questions he might please to put to them; but he addressed them not. He said to his sister:—

"Has either of those men ill-treated or insulted you?"

"Oh, no, no! Dr. Campbell, in particular, has been very kind; he was seeing me home when this Indian gentleman met us; he, too, meant no ill, but—" (whispering) "I fancy he is insane."

She was then proceeding to account to him for being out at that hour and under Campbell's protection, but he stopped her:—

"Not now, Caroline; have you no charge to bring against either of these gentlemen?"

"Not the slightest, my dear brother."

He then bowed to them both and walked away, supporting his sister, who seemed scarcely able to regulate her tottering steps.

When they were gone the Indian stepped up to Campbell. He made no eastern salaam, but taking off his scarlet cap he bowed low, in the old English fashion, and simply saying "*Au revoir!*" disappeared.

"Halt!" roared Campbell, "I would speak a few words with you!"

No answer was returned. He searched about for him in every direction, but no traces of him were to be found. Wearied, troubled, and perplexed, he proceeded on his way to his cottage.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE DOCTOR AND THE FARMER.

"My mind is like a troubled fountain stirr'd,
And I myself see not the bottom of it."
SHAKESPEARE.

DR. CAMPBELL walked slowly on under the rich mellow light of the waning moon, with no very agreeable companions in his own thoughts. He was forcibly struck by the manner in which Lord Fitzarthur had treated him. When he rushed among them, instead of shaking hands with him on discovering who he was, and asking him, as a friend, what was the matter, he had treated him,—the confidential physician of the family,—blameless in all his relations with Lady Caroline,—ever cautious, reserved, and prudent,—as if he were an unknown assailant, a person against whom it was likely his sister had some charge to bring. He viewed him in the same light as he did the wild, impetuous, mysterious Asiatic—"Has *either of those men* insulted you?"—and when Lady Caroline had exculpated them, with an especial compliment to himself, instead of begging his pardon, or saying a word of atonement, he had simply made to him and the Indian an apologetic bow, which they were left at liberty to divide between them, or toss up for, whichever they pleased. He had been quite ready to sacrifice his life in

saving Lady Caroline from a madman, and this was his thanks, instead of being asked to the Abbey for the night, and treated with the kindness and gratitude that he felt he deserved. As a solution for the difficulty it occurred to him,—and he was not far from the truth,—that Fitzarthur, finding he could not prove him guilty of *rudeness* or *assault*, had come to the conclusion that he and Caroline had met by appointment, and clandestinely, to take "a lovers' walk" together, and that he had engaged her affections unknown to her father. What base and dishonourable conduct to have laid to his charge, and so unmerited too! And yet the more he reflected the more convinced he became that the brother entertained these suspicions with respect to him. Heaven knows it was enough for him to bear what he deserved, without the aggravation of this treachery, against which his mind revolted. How unlucky that he had met Lady Caroline! and then that they should both meet the Indian, with his horrible insulting language and very unaccountable hints. Who was he, and what could be the meaning of his conduct? Such a dangerous person must not be permitted to roam about the country freely, ready to stab people if they did not give up the female they had in charge to his wicked will. For Campbell felt convinced he was going to stab him when Fitzarthur's fortunate interruption took place. Some steps must be taken; Mr. Routledge, a magistrate, must be consulted; if the unhappy creature was mad he should be put into an asylum; if not he must be bound over to keep the peace. And this fellow was harboured by Higgin, too! Ay, he was very near forgetting that, and he would see into it before he went home. He quickened his pace, and soon reached Nannie's cottage.

The kitchen window was open; a candle stood on the table where Higgin sat eating his supper. Campbell

knocked at the cottage door which was opened by Nannie.

"Tell Higgin when he has done his supper to come out to me; I shall be sitting on the wall at the opposite side of the road."

"Will not you come in, sir, and speak to him in the house?" said she.

"No; I prefer the open air."

He sat down on the wall, cast his eyes over the Hill of Cones that lay beneath him, and finally fixed them on one spot, from which he never moved them until Higgin came out of the house and stood before him. Sullenly he stood and without speaking. Campbell began:—

"Higgin, I know you take it ill of me that I would not recommend you to Miss Neville for the situation of gamekeeper, but I did not refuse because I had nothing good to say of you, as I am sure you may know, but—I cannot possibly ask a favour of that young lady. Private feelings must be respected, and I would not be more explicit to my dearest friend than I am now to you. If she could get Mr. Davenport made a bishop, and that it depended on my asking her, I would neither ask her, nor give him any reason for my refusing. If you are not content with this, I can say no more."

"Well, sir, it must be as you like, I'm no judge of your feelings; mayhap you've good reasons, and the report may not be true."

"What report?" asked Campbell hastily.

"Why I was told by all the people that you were going to be married to her, and I fancied it would not be much to ask her——"

"I am not going to be married to her!" cried Campbell, "and I never shall either; such an idea never came into my head."

Higgin remained silent and discontented. Campbell's

first words of apology were mysterious, and he suspected the lady might have refused him, and he ceased to be surprised that under those circumstances he should scruple to ask a favour of her; but Campbell's last speech implied he had never thought of her himself, so there could be no awkwardness in doing what Mr. James or any friend would do:—the wound still rankled in his bosom.

"I suppose you have done with me now, sir," said he at last.

"By no means; I have something very important to speak of." He then described his encounter with the Indian, the unaccountable opposition he made to his progress, his violence to Lady Caroline, and the horrible language he had made use of to himself.

"Now I ask you, Higgin," he said in conclusion, "whether this is a character whom you should encourage to stay in the country by allowing him the protection of your roof? what on earth brought him here, or put it into his head to take up his quarters with you?"

Higgin looked astounded. His answer evaded the principal question.

"Well, sir, you astonish me; I could not suppose it possible he would have been so—so rash; 'tis very unlike him."

"Like him or unlike him," interrupted Campbell, "such proceedings must be stopped. It will be very little comfort to people when he has given them a mortal stroke, to have it whispered into their dying ear 'that it was very unlike him.' I am sure he was going to stab me: why did he use the words of Ehud, if he was not going to follow them up by the act of Ehud?"

"As to that, sir, I don't know who Mr. Ehud is; as concerns this foreign gentleman,—why, I doubt he was going to murder you——"

"What!" broke in Campbell, "does that Hindoo know the Bible better than you? Did you never read the book of Judges?"

"I read my Testament, sir, and goes by it, I hope. I could read out the first chapter of St. Matthew without stopping to spell a word, and that is a great deal for a poor man who is no scholar, but always handling the spade or the plough."

Campbell mused for a moment; then he said:—

"That man used one or two very singular expressions; only Lady Caroline thinks him mad, I'm sure I can't tell what her opinion of me would be." Then in an altered tone, and with a look as nearly approaching the ferocious as such a face would admit of, he cried:—

"Have you ever, by hint, or implication, if not by broad statement, betrayed me to him or any one else?"

"I vow to heaven I never have, sir."

"But you will allow at any rate, that I have very good reason to feel unsafe in his neighbourhood, and—keep him in you house if you wish, I can't hinder you, but you will be surprised some day by a visit from me and Mr. Routledge to take him up as a dangerous lunatic."

"He is not a lunatic, sir."

"Then he will have to answer to a summons for a gross assault. What is his name?"

"I am sure I can't recollect the queer out-of-the-way name he has. Did he strike you, sir?"

"Not exactly; he dragged Lady Caroline Fitzarthur by the arm, and told me I should not pass until I gave her up to him! and such language!"

"The worse the language was, the better for you, sir, for the more likely was her ladyship to be convinced he was mad."

"I see you are determined to plead for him."

"I don't want to plead for him; summons him as fast

as you like. One thing I'll say; you acknowledged just now, in telling me the story, that you lifted up your cane to him, and that he had a bamboo rod in his hand that he never used, so you were nearer assaulting him than he was you: if he assaulted any one it was her ladyship, so you'll have to bring her before the magistrates, and she must swear herself and you were walking alone together at that hour of the night."

"I am not going to place her ladyship in such an unworthy position. The question returns however:—what *are* we to do? are we to be left to his mercy? Is he mad?"

"He is not mad, sir; he is very passionate, but I did not expect he'd go on that way. If you will just stay quiet I will undertake he does not molest you any more on the high-road. I suppose you won't be out at night again walking with her or any other lady?"

"Of course I won't; you know it was by chance I met her."

"I do, sir, surely. Now, I'll engage he does not act any more as he did to-night, and don't you take the matter up, for you'll make nothing of it, except to expose a noble lady. Did I ever fail you in anything I ensured to you?"

"No, never."

"Then I now warrant he does not behave that way again. But as to turning him out of my house, I cannot treat him so. You spoke yourself just now of having feelings you could not expose; and though I am a poor ignorant man, I may have the same sort too; I can neither turn him out nor give my reasons for keeping him."

"Well, I suppose I must be satisfied for the present," said Campbell, rising to depart.

"I have one word more to say, sir."

"Speak on."

"That twenty pound a year you've been giving me latterly,——well, I won't trouble your worship for it any more."

"What frolic is this?"

"No frolic at all, sir; but thank God I am able to work, and I don't see why I should be taking the earnings of other men when I am right well able to earn for myself."

"You need not speak in such an impudent way; it is no inconvenience to me to give you that small section of my income. Have you got any new accession of strength lately, that you can work more now than you have done for the last few years?"

"No, sir; time don't generally add to a man's strength, but it may open other lights to him, and I don't want your money no more."

"Higgin," said Campbell, sternly, "I see your object: you are renouncing my benefits that you may betray me with less remorse. You have still so much conscience left that you do not wish to receive my favours with one hand, and sign my death-warrant with the other. I thank you."

"You need not take on so, sir. I don't know what right you have to be always saying I'm going to injure you. I can understand how people may find out that a man *has* done a thing, or *is doing* a thing; but how it can be divined that one is *intending* to do a thing, when he has never breathed such intentions to any one, passes my poor wits to explain; but I suppose it is because I have got no learning. And another thing:—did you never notice or hear that people were sometimes goaded to an act by being perpetually jawed for 'intending to do it'? But I am not going to tell your affairs, nor to take your money in future."

He then re-entered Nannie's cottage, where he meant to spend the night.

Dr. Campbell proceeded on his way. In vain did his "many-musing spirit" seek to dive into the meaning of what he had lately heard and seen. Why had Higgin thrown up his pension? What strange union was there subsisting between him and the Indian, that the former could answer for the latter that he would do his bidding, and restrain his impulsive, unreasoning Asiatic spirit at the suggestion of a rude British peasant? Was it by chance, or from knowledge, that the Indian had uttered one word that had made him shiver through every nerve? Who was he, and what earthly cause could he have for hating him (Campbell) with such a bitter hatred, and for heaping such venomous words on his head? He could not possibly have wronged him in any manner, for they were utter strangers to one another. What could be the meaning of the tiger-like ferocity with which he had struggled to tear Lady Caroline from under his protection? These were questions for which his sagacity could find no answer, and which he was obliged to lay up in the recesses of his heart until time or chance might afford an explanation. He next surveyed his own peculiar situation;—there were two ladies very favourably inclined to him,—there was no use in shutting his eyes any longer to the fact, awkward and ridiculous as it was; and if he persisted in keeping them shut, he might open them when it was too late. Lady Caroline's words, uttered that night in her paroxysm, were ringing in his ears:—"I would go with him to prison and to death!" and he believed her too; and he knew that her woman's heart would hold more bravely to that fervid protestation than did the craven soul of him by whose lips these words were first uttered. But still not one ripple of his heart set in the direction of this young girl; to her it was as motionless

and cold as marble; there was nothing in her nature congenial to his,—he could not love her, did he deem himself required to do so. But fortunately the requirements were all on the other side, for, whatever the lady herself might desire, Lord Fitzarthur had shown very plainly how he was disposed to treat Campbell if he attempted to appear in the light of a lover, and Campbell was quite ready to concede to his lordship's wishes. So he resolved that he would not visit at the Abbey again unless he got a note from Lord Northwood himself, requesting of him to go there professionally, and then he would simply do his duty and withdraw immediately.

As to Miss Neville, she had quite confounded him yesterday by some hints she had thrown out; he plainly saw he had only to ask her if he wished to be her husband,—but that he would never be. He certainly liked her better than he did Lady Caroline; she had a more vigorous intellect, and more earnest and deep affections and feelings; Caroline's was a feeble character, and hers was a strong one; she had some faults, and oddities, and affectations, no doubt, every one of which, however, could be eradicated by a man whom she ardently loved and respected, and the fabric that remained behind would be brightened, ennobled, strengthened. Caroline's character was defaced by a thousand little foibles, fooleries, prepossessions, and fancies; clear them all away, and what was left behind? nothing almost. It would have been as if you were to remove the entire of the woof from a slender web, and were to expect to find in the warp cohesion and firmness. Miss Neville's faults were stains on the surface; Lady Caroline's formed the staple of her composition; no deeper foundation of strength lay beneath them; they had usurped the place of principals; in the heiress they were subordinates which she despised while she wilfully indulged them. But still, whatever Miss Neville was, or

could be made, Campbell did not love her, and would he marry a woman he did not love because she was very rich? Disgusting thought! He would far rather unite himself to a poor woman that he did not care for, because he could come on to loving her much sooner. He would have rescued her from a world where she was forlorn, desolate, tempted; he would toil for her, comfort her, cheer her; she would look on him with trusting, devoted affection, as one to whom she owed everything, from whom she hoped everything; surely a manly heart would soon cling fondly to such a being as that! But to be linked to a Juno-like, haughty daughter of fortune,—to feel that every luxury he enjoyed, and every amusement he engaged in, was the gift of her hand,—to be conscious that he, the nobler vessel, had powers that he could not exercise, rights that her independence annulled, and a superior freedom of action that she might possibly assert she had some title to control;—surely, if she adored him even, such a state as that could never beget in him a love that had not previously existed!

These ladies being disposed of, his thoughts next reverted to Mrs. Davenport. What were her faults? He could not tell; he had never seen any in her. Her shining qualities, then,—what were they? He was equally at a loss to name any particular one: perhaps he could not separate himself sufficiently from her to examine her in detail; perhaps he felt too warmly towards her to scan her with a calm, critical eye, and pronounce on her a cool, approving verdict. But he was not satisfied with either of these explanations. A steady bright vision of purity—not material enough to be analysed, and to have its component parts classed, with its appropriate share of applause assigned to each—floated before his mind whenever she became the subject of his contemplation. She seemed of too ethereal a nature to be caught, studied,

and described, even by the most delicate and skilful observer.

The only successful mode of becoming sensible of her perfections was, he always found, not to study herself, but the effect her society produced on him. He always left her presence purer, happier, nobler, than when he had entered it. When the door closed after her, and he was left alone, he felt inclined to drop on his knees and pray. All his difficulties in labouring to reconcile the immutability of the Divinity with the transition state of mind implied by the granting of a petition *in consequence* of its being offered up, vanished when he heard her singing a hymn, or teaching her infants to lisp their simple prayer. She appeared like an angel sent with a message from Heaven, which made it impious to reason and madness to doubt. When he was weary of the old world, she made a new one for him; when his hopes were sinking, she infused into them fresh strength; and when despair would take possession of him, she bid it away. After the Purdon catastrophe she had restored him to life; he could not tell by what particular arts, but the existence he now enjoyed was her gift. In this manner he ventured to estimate the latent qualities of her mind; she resembled, in his opinion, some fine physical agent, too subtle for the chemist's direct inspection, but the properties of which he is enabled to discover by watching its effects when brought into proximity with some other substance. There was no cardinal virtue standing out here, no "Christian grace" dazzling you there; there was a harmonious whole that made music with whatever heart had the happiness of coming in contact with it, but there was no special quality bespeaking your approbation. All must admit that a sphere is one of the most beautiful objects in existence; but what should we say to the person who asked us to name the particular part that we admired the most?

When he contrasted his Milly with the two young ladies above-mentioned, how holy and innocent she appeared! Unsought for, unsolicited by the simple child, he had clung to her from his boyhood, caught up every green sprout of affection as it was germinating in her young breast, twined and wound it round the sapling in his own, which was throwing out responsive tendrils to meet it, and thus bade the two grow to maturity together, indissolubly wrapped in one another.

Yet the love of these two unfortunate young women had nothing low or interested about it, nothing unworthy of the divine passion; it came fresh from their hearts; in every worldly advantage Campbell was far their inferior, but it wanted the, for him, indispensable fascination,—it was unsued for, unasked for, of hasty growth, it might be a whim, —it certainly had too much of earth in it;—from his deep soul it could meet with no response. Having arranged to his satisfaction his line of conduct with respect to the Northwood family, he next laid his plans about Sunville; he regretted much that he had gone there so often lately, but it was all Mr. Warner's fault; wherever that old caitiff turned up, he was sure to bring embarrassment and woe to his innocent victim. It was a pretty thing that the servants of Miss Neville were beginning to notice their young mistress's fancy,—for it was they, of course, who had put about the report that Higgin heard;—but it should be stopped as soon as possible; he would visit there very seldom, and not dine there any more, and would take the first opportunity of recommending Miss Neville sea-bathing to strengthen her ankle after her accident.

When he got home he found Rachel watching anxiously for him: he had told her he would be back by nine, and it was now near twelve o'clock.

"Oh, but you're welcome!" she cried; then—"Dear

soul, you look pale and tired though! Lie down on the sofa, and I'll put on your slippers."

He was a man towards whom women felt a longing to use tender epithets; he was so gentle, and so sad, and so lonely; so made to be loved, and yet, apparently, with none to love him; returning night after night to his cheerless home, to receive such welcome as might be accorded to him by his maid, his dog, and his skeleton. Certainly the two living things were not deficient in testifying their affection, each in its particular way; the skeleton itself would have loved him if it had only a heart to do it with. He shook hands kindly with his Rachel, and drank off the entire bowl of posset. It was a perfect blessing to see a woman who had not matrimonial views respecting him; who could touch his hand without trembling, and could meet his eye with the tranquil and steady look of quiet friendship. He went to bed cursing his fate, or Mr. Warner, for with him they were synonymous terms; he was in a perpetual turmoil about women, and yet doomed to a joyless, companionless existence; he wondered what girls meant by setting their affections on him of all people, a pale, worn, broken-hearted mope, looking ten years older than he was;—this being the light in which he was pleased to contemplate himself.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SABINA AND HER MISTRESS.

"Nought's so sublime as energetic bile,
Though horrible to see, yet grand to tell,
Like ocean warring 'gainst a rocky isle;
And the deep passions flashing through her form,
Made her a beautiful embodied storm."

BYRON.

LORD NORTHWOOD, on coming home late in the evening and inquiring for his daughter, was greeted with the intelligence that she had not been seen or heard of since she had taken an early dinner, several hours before. Carriages, horses, and servants were all quietly in their places: one of the females recollected having observed her in the afternoon standing on the steps, dressed in the bonnet and shawl that she generally wore in the garden; so all the out-door premises were searched, Anthony the monk's cell being in no wise forgotten. The distracted father then despatched Lord Fitzarthur and two footmen to scour the country in three different directions, and during their absence he walked up and down the dining-room in the greatest agitation, not touching a morsel of food. When her brother brought her in, he rushed to embrace her, and she, sinking in his arms, got into violent hysterics, perfectly overcome by the exciting scenes she had gone through. She was put to bed immediately, and given re-

viving draughts; no questions were asked for the present, Lord Fitzarthur satisfying the earl on the principal points.

Poor Sabina, on her part, had spent two hours before her mistress's return rocking herself to and fro, and moaning and crying most piteously. She loved Lady Caroline with all the warmth of her impulsive southern extraction, (her mother had been a Neapolitan, though her father was a Swiss), and indeed she had been always treated by her young mistress with great gentleness and kindness. The chant with which she accompanied her tears and sobs, was —"Elle est partie! elle est partie! Elle ne retournera jamais! que deviendrai-je, seule dans ce château?"— "Traitre, perfide!" "Perfide, traitre!" was the refrain, uttered with a menacing flash of indignation from her dark flooded eyes; this being an apostrophe to some imaginary youth, who, she took for granted, had decoyed her beloved lady from the paternal roof.

As soon as she perceived Lady Caroline slowly ascending the stairs leaning on her father and followed by the waiting-woman and housekeeper, her joy became unbounded. She shrieked, danced, fell into a wild fit of laughter, and kissed her mistress's hands and neck, totally regardless of the proximity of the earl. Caroline's heart smote her when she recollected that she had just put matters in training for sending her away; but still it could not be helped—it must be done.

The next morning Lady Caroline breakfasted in bed, and would have remained there the whole day, only she thought it almost certain that Dr. Campbell would come to the Abbey in the afternoon to inquire what her state was after her very unusual trials. But, of course, no Campbell came, and she lay languidly on the sofa, carefully watched by her father. She gave him a very faithful account of her visit to Mrs. Ford, concealing however her motive for going, saying that as she was

alone she thought it would amuse her to walk to the poor woman's cottage, and read to her as Miss Bolton did; she was so unaccustomed to think for herself that she had let the darkness steal on unobserved, while listening to Mrs. Ford's interesting stories of old times; she granted she had been very imprudent in setting off in the dark attended by no one but a countryman that she knew nothing about; she spoke of her meeting with Campbell in so simple and natural a manner that it never entered into the earl's head to suspect that there was design in the case, particularly as he had spoken a few words to the doctor at the gate, and had been told by him that he was going to vaccinate an infant. She did not repeat a word of the strange and terrible expressions of the Indian; indeed, she was convinced he was insane, and why pain herself by repeating his ravings? She merely told her father that he was crazed, and insisted on seeing her home, and rudely repulsed Dr. Campbell, who, on his part, showed himself quite ready to sacrifice his life rather than give up the care of her. Lord Northwood accordingly came to a very different conclusion from what his son had done; praised Campbell warmly, and resolved to write him a note of thanks if he did not soon see him. After giving her a gentle lecture for her rashness, and assuring her that she should have a nice little pony-chaise to drive from cot to cot in whenever she wished to visit the poor in her neighbourhood, he left her to attend to some other affairs, and she spent the rest of the day vainly watching for Dr. Campbell, and torturing herself to discover every possible argument for and against his reported engagement to Miss Neville.

Dr. Campbell contrived to get the earliest intelligence of the departure of Amelia's father. It was Wednesday. The moment his breakfast was over he was impatient to go to the Vicarage and see how they all were, but on

reflection he thought it better to wait till Davenport should be gone to church. Not but that he would be very glad to see the poor fellow, but then he was very noisy, and had such high spirits he might be too much for him to-day, as he was a good deal upset since the night he had met the Indian and Lord Fitzarthur, and had been treated in such a manner by each in succession. He wanted a low, sweet, kind voice to soothe him, and Milly did not say a word when her husband was in the room, or if she did even—could he hear her? When the rooks are mustering for the night, it is not easy to catch the vesper hymn of the robin. So he left Cypress Cottage a little before eleven, and arrived at the Vicarage just as Davenport, in his church a little higher up on the hill, was saying, "Rend your hearts and not your garments," to three old women in threadbare red cloaks.

The front door was open and he walked in; he never knocked at that house, of course, unless he wanted particularly to see a servant; his power was paramount to all other power there; Davenport was the master, but he was the *genius loci*—the bearer of balm and the health-preserver, both to the precious children and the "placens uxor." He went to the nursery first; she was not there; the maids smiled their welcome, and the children flew to him and hung about him, and would have shown him all the presents grandpapa had brought them, but he, having embraced them, hurried away. He went next to the dressing-room, and knocked timidly at the door.

"Come in," said the voice that was wont to heal all his wounds.

He entered. She was standing before her press settling it, and Sammy was sitting on a cloak in the middle of the room, playing with such cast-off articles as she was pleased to throw him.

Campbell flew to her and seized both her hands in his, and wrung them as if he would have wrung them off.

"Sweet, how are you? How have you been ever since?"

And he devoured her face with his eyes, for it was all he could dare to do. She answered in her usual soft, quiet manner—of course she was "quite well." Many a woman's "quite well" bears a very singular relation to the exact meaning of those two words.

"But you look very pale, my darling!"

Oh! that word came out quite unintentionally; he hardly knew what he was saying; he was holding her hands, and all his pulses were throbbing up to her, and he could not press her to his breast in one embrace that would have quieted everything. He continued:—

"You are very pale, Milly; but you have just parted from your father."

"Oh, it is not that," she answered; "he went away early this morning and I did not get up; he told me last night I must not. Arthur got him coffee, and everything he wanted—it is not that."

"Then you have been walking too much; ah! I was not here to check you, and your father did not consider——"

She interrupted him.

"No, indeed, Robert; we never walked together; I drove out with him every day, and showed him the country; and when he wished to walk Arthur alone accompanied him; it is not that——" And she lifted up her melting blue eyes and looked into his, pleadingly, as if to say, "Ask me no more! I should not look pale; I have had all my legitimate blessings about me for the last ten days, father, husband, children: I ought to be happy—ask me no more!"

There was not a thought in those eyes that he did not

read; ay, far more distinctly came her meaning than if the most telling words had uttered it in the most expressive language yet invented. They were silent for a space; then he said,—

"Now you have been standing for the last hour, perhaps, in front of this foolish press, but your master is come back and you stand no more;" and with his sweet, playful authority he led her to her arm-chair, and placed her in it, and stood looking at her.

"I like that pink and white muslin gown very much; far better than those silks you generally wear; but I suppose they are more stylish and fashionable. Now you look as if you were dressed in sunset clouds. But this cap—have you worn caps ever since you were ill?"

"Oh no, only in the morning; I will take it off for dinner."

"It must come off now," said he, with that smile that Lord Fitzarthur dreaded so much; and he lifted it off daintily with his delicate fingers, and dropped it on the table.

Then he watched some of the rich curls that it had partly confined, as they tumbled without restraint upon her neck. He next sat down on the floor at her feet; he was fond of placing himself in the most humble posture with respect to her, as if to show how completely she was his divinity. He laid his hands on her knees and looked up into her face; the virgin goddess Athenè, herself, allowed her suppliants to do thus much.

And so they sat; the two whom God had joined together, and whom man had put asunder,—not quite, however, as you may perceive, but as far as he was able, poor creature! His most vehement acts sometimes best show his impotence. He hacks the worm in two, and each part walks off, a complete animal, as naturalists assure us. His division is Nature's multiplication; he throws for de-

struction and she turns up doubled vitality. Thus she laughs at him, and baffles him in the case of the very meanest of created things. When he turns his mind to doing his will on his fellow-creatures, the result is somewhat different. Two hearts have moved to one another by the laws of attraction, and are just united; he hews them asunder with his axe, and makes them one for ever. "*Naturam expellas furco, tamen usque recurrit*," says a man who sometimes startles us with a word or two of earnest truth, in the midst of all his hardness, his trifling, and his commonplaces.

Meantime Sammy, on his cloak, began to think himself neglected and ill-used. When his papa came into the room he was accustomed to be caught up in his arms and entertained with a succession of crowings, but these columbian demonstrations were very stupid things for him,—nay, perhaps his instincts rebelled against them; certain it is, the loyal little fellow turned towards his mamma, and began to roar most lustily. He was very like his father, and, as he fixed his overflowing eyes on Amelia, she thought she saw Davenport's piercing look penetrating her through that indignant shower. His voice too, although he was so young, had a marvellous tone of his father's in it, and it came ringing in Campbell's ear like a shout from his friend. They both sprang up; Mrs. Davenport caught her child and caressed him, and Campbell said,—

"Come to the garden; it is a shame to have us spending this fine day in the house."

He took Sammy from her, and she put on her bonnet, and they went down-stairs. In the hall they met Jemmy.

"Oh, doctor," he cried, for they had cured him of saying "Daddy," "let me show you the beautiful magic lantern that grandpapa brought me."

"Go and get your Latin lesson for me first," answered

Campbell; "and if you come on to be a good scholar, I will show you finer slides in Livy than you can possibly exhibit to me in your lantern. Is not that a puzzle? Be off directly."

He did not want to have Jemmy in the garden; he preferred Sammy somehow.

"Yes, go to your lessons," said his mamma; "you have been a great idler since grandpapa came to us. But first tell the cook that Dr. Campbell is to dine here."

The boy ran off. "And how do you know I intend to dine here?" said Campbell, slapping her on the cheek with his glove.

"Because I know you are honest, Robert," answered she, with her own sunny smile, "and you owe us such an immense debt that I am sure you would not have shown your face here to-day if you were not prepared to pay one instalment."

They proceeded to the garden and buried themselves in the bower that he had made for her, now dark and thick with the ample foliage of summer. He placed Milly on his left hand, set the little child on his knee, clasped him round with his right arm, and threw his left—Heaven knows where,—I'm sure I don't. I will no longer be a spy on this unfortunate man, nor hunt him down to the last haven of his broken spirit.

Crushed in the morning of life by Mr. Warner,—now in his prime desolate by his solitary hearth,—importuned in the world by caresses and overtures from women, to him more offensive than neglect,—rebuffed by their connexions in a manner most wounding to his feelings, as if he was accountable for female fancies (Miss Maria Neville had begun to show him, though not so plainly as Lord Fitzarthur, that she did not want him for a brother-in-law);—outraged, alarmed, and threatened from other quarters, with memories of the past constantly haunting

him, and vague apprehensions about the future frequently disturbing his mind,—no wonder if his bleeding, quivering heart sought such balm as might still be granted by one who felt that she had been untrue to him, but with whom he knew he was safe, for since she had wedded another he was aware she would keep firm to her vow;—no wonder if he clung a little too closely to the only being whose sympathies were ever with him,—to the brave soul that would not let him abuse his power,—to the loving soul that was the same now that it had been in the recesses of Warner Park,—and to the matured woman, not ignorant of human sorrow and suffering, who would bear his burden with him, and thereby deprive it of half its weight. So he told her of various things that had troubled him since last he saw her, but of his delicate position with regard to the two young ladies he of course said nothing.

So now we must leave the Vicarage for the present; they are all enjoying themselves very much; Davenport is come home, and they are sitting after dinner, and the six children with them, and Amelia looks animated and has a fine colour, and Davenport vows she never looked so beautiful, and thanks his stars he has got Campbell again in place of his father-in-law (whom in his heart he thinks a confounded bore), and is inclined to get into exuberant spirits; and our hero is very lively, and on the whole the Vicarage is quite a happy place this afternoon.

Day after day Lady Caroline had been vainly expecting Dr. Campbell to call, as she thought the commonest politeness demanded, to inquire in person how she felt after a night of such unwonted exertion and agitation to her. It never once came into her mind to suspect that he might be hurt at the manner in which her brother had treated him; she never contemplated him in relation to any of the family except to herself. She next begged of her father to write him the note of thanks which the earl

had said his conduct merited, and this was accordingly done, and an invitation to dinner was added moreover. A polite answer came; he was happy her ladyship had not suffered; he had done nothing but his duty; the dinner invitation was respectfully declined. So thus affairs remained for the present; she strove to keep up appearances, but the task grew every day more difficult.

About a week after her unfortunate visit to Mrs. Ford, Higgin made his appearance at Northwood Abbey, authorized by the Miss Nevilles to say that, if Lady Caroline still wished to part with her Swiss servant, they would be glad to receive her into their establishment. It was a relief to Lady Caroline to hear of a comfortable home for Sabina, and she immediately informed Higgin, through the footman, that the young girl should be sent to Sunville the next day in one of Lord Northwood's conveyances.

Lady Caroline's next difficulty was how to impart to Sabina that she was, the very next morning, to change her mistress and her home. She had, some time before, intimated to her that she would part with her when she could provide her with a comfortable situation, but Sabina either never believed it, or had, apparently, quite forgotten it. Caroline felt wretched; she knew the intelligence would burst on Sabina like a thunderbolt; but still it must come from herself; she felt the impropriety of communicating such information through another servant. So she ran up at once desperately to her dressing-room, where Sabina was employed at some business for her, and told her her fate in that abrupt manner which is usual when people want to get a disagreeable matter over as quickly as possible, and fear their feelings will overpower them. Sabina sent a lightning-flash on her from her dark eyes:—

" Il n'est pas vrai! vous vous moquez de moi! eh, vous plaisantez, sans doute!"

Caroline, trembling, strove to assume dignity.

" Sabina, it would ill become me to jest with my servants; whatever I say to you is serious truth."

She might as well have attempted to check a spring-tide by opening her parasol against it with a commanding air. The child of the south threw herself on the sofa, and began to utter terrible screams, joined with a torrent of tears. When she became articulate, she said,—

" Vous me chassez, vous me chassez;—quel est mon crime? Je m'en repens;—je ferai tout ce que vous voulez." Then she sprang up and looked fierce and menacing: " Me bannir ainsi! loin de mon pays! Vous n'osez pas!"

" You must not use this language, Sabina; I am not sending you out on the world; I have provided you with a safe home, where there is an elderly married lady who will take the best care of you—better than I can."

" Non, non, je n'irai pas . . . ces vilaines dames!"

Then, thinking an appeal in her own language might have more effect on her mistress, she cried,—

" Strange faces in a strange country! you will not put me among them! Send me back to la belle France, where you found me, or keep me near your own face, and I will think I am there. Do you remember the first day you saw me? Oh, I was so happy then! But I liked your gentle looks, and I came with you; but I must remain near you;—O ma belle et bonne maîtresse, ne me chassez pas!" and she flung her arms round Lady Caroline's waist, who straightway burst into tears.

At this moment Elpsley, who had heard the screams, hastened into the room and looked aghast, seeing the state of affairs; but, before she could speak, Sabina cried, while a wild joy beamed from her eyes,—

"Ha! elle pleure! elle pleure! je dois rester! je le savais bien! elle n'aura pas le cœur de me chasser;—elle m'aime; Elsy, regardez ses larmes!"

"Méchante fille! que voulez vous?" said Elpsley, pulling her away from Lady Caroline; "my lady, shall I take her down and lock her up?"

"Lock me up!" exclaimed Sabina, with an annihilating look at the waiting-woman; then, changing her manner, with an extraordinary rapidity, she said,—"Yes, do, good Elsy, lock me up, keep me here always; put the key in your pocket, and they will not be able to tear me away to-morrow; I will stay in prison, if you will bring her to see me every day."

"My dear Sabina," cried Lady Caroline, "this must not continue; you cannot stay; pray make up your mind; in a week you will be quite at home with the Miss Nevilles; they are rich and generous, and reside in a beautiful place;—you will have every comfort. Elpsley, do take her away, and assist her to arrange and pack her clothes, and I will give her two handsome dresses—"

Sabina interrupted her.

"I will have no dresses,—no dresses! Give me all the clothes in the world, and—je suis nue, si vous me chassez."

She was led off by Elpsley, and "Vous me chassez" rebounded more and more feebly in the distance, until it was finally snapped asunder by the dash of the spring-door that separated the waiting-women's apartments from the rest of the house.

To do Sabina justice, the thought that she was going to be separated from her admirer scarcely entered into her consideration during the late scene. She had such a passionate love for her young mistress—the sight of whom ever recalled happy scenes, cloudless skies, the laughter,

the sports, and the melodies of France, where she had resided for five years previous to her entering Lord Northwood's service—that the intelligence that she was going to be separated from her for ever was in itself too stupefying to permit any other sorrow to claim a rivalry with it in her breast. But the other affliction, with all its bitterness, took full possession of her the moment she entered her own room, and the rest of the day was spent in moans and ejaculations which rendered her incapable of any exertion, and the preparations for her departure had to be made by one of the other domestics.

Lady Caroline wept for an hour after Sabina had been removed from her apartment. Her words, "I will stay in prison if you will bring *her* to see me every day," were knocking at her heart with an appeal that she could scarcely resist. Several times she was on the point of ringing the bell and sending her word that she had changed her mind, and would permit her to remain, but she was as often checked by the recollection of the strange effect such conduct would produce on the minds of the Sunville ladies, so, with a heavy heart, she let things take their course.

When her father and brother came in to dinner they were exasperated on learning the cause of her swollen eyes and agitated appearance. The earl peremptorily forbid her having another interview with that "impudent minx;" he knew well what it was when a "foreigner" got into her "tantarums,"—a house did not recover it for a month. Gordon should pay her her wages and see her sent off respectably and comfortably; ay, he would rather do it himself than let his child go near her again. She implored permission to bid her farewell, but Lord Fitzarthur put a stop to anything further on the subject.

"Caroline, to what end would it avail? The same scene would be all played over a second time; yield to

our father in this; your wishes are very seldom thwarted, —indeed, never, but with a view to your own personal comfort and tranquillity. I will take care that she shall know it is not your fault that you do not take leave of her."

He then made her sit down to chess with him until bedtime, when he saw her to her room. He next instructed Gordon to have everything in readiness for Sabina to leave the Abbey at eight the next morning. Finally he ordered Elpsley to inform the young girl that she had made her mistress so unwell by her tempestuous behaviour in the afternoon, that Lord Northwood had forbidden her coming into her presence again.

Elpsley thought proper to follow her own judgment on the occasion; she would give her no such message, she settled in her mind; drive her mad indeed completely, by telling her she had made Lady Caroline very ill, when she already showed as much madness as those about her were inclined to put up with. So she simply told her to go to bed, and that everything else would be settled in the morning.

In the morning accordingly she was called at half-past six, and desired to prepare as quickly as possible for her departure. She said there was no need of haste, as she could not go until she saw her mistress.

"You go at eight," said Elpsley, drily, "and her ladyship is never down till nine."

"I will not go without taking leave of her!" she screamed.

"My lord gave orders that you should go at eight," said two or three women at the same time.

She burst into tears.

"And she would not see me last night! Not one loving word!" Then she fell into her favourite language again. "Elle me chasse! sans adieu! Je ne la reverrai

jamais! Je pars pour toujours, je ne reviendrai jamais!" "Toujours, jamais!" "jamais, toujours!" formed the dismal refrain of this her last lament, as they vainly endeavoured to make her eat some breakfast.

The groom was waiting in a gig at the yard-gate, and the gardener was standing near it, ready to hand her in. At length she appeared, escorted by two females. She was no longer weeping. Her face was pale, and her look fixed, and almost ferocious. She did not walk, but slided, or rather rubbed her feet along the ground without lifting them up, just in the manner of Rachel, and like that actress she made a dead halt every fifty seconds or so, saying, in a suffocated voice,

"Elle me chasse,—sans chagrin,—sans adieu; comme si j'étais une coquine! Moi! qui l'a servie avec tant de fidélité! Elle me payera! Elle me payera! Vengeance, vengeance!"

They entreated of her not to use such "shocking language," but she continued this mode of moving and these words until she reached the vehicle. Her lover pressed her hand, but she took scarcely any notice of him; a passion stronger than love, or at least stronger than the love she felt for him, had taken possession of her soul, and in this state of mind she was whirled away from Northwood Abbey.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE HEIRESS FORMS A GRAND SCHEME.

"Ingiustissimo amor, perchè sì raro
Corrispondenti fai nostri desiri?
Onde, perfido, vien che t' è sì caro
Il discorde voler ch' in dui cor miri?"

ARIOSTO.

LORD FITZARTHUR could not for a moment doubt his sister's word when she assured him that her meeting with Dr. Campbell on the night when they were found in so singular a situation was purely accidental. Still he was convinced that there was an attachment on both sides, and he was resolved that the intimacy interrupted by himself, rather roughly he allowed, should not be renewed. He considered her in pretty good health, and he trusted he might keep her so. She should not pine in solitude, of course: she should have associates worthy of her regard. He resolved to invite, with his father's permission, a party of his noble, fashionable friends to spend the shooting season at the Abbey. They would make her ashamed to confess, to herself even, that she had ever looked with favour on a "dispensary doctor!" But in the mean time she must not be permitted to sit moping at home, brooding over the past, and relapsing into nervous debility.

So a few days after Sabina went away he ordered the carriage, and told her she must go out to drive; that he

would not hear of her shutting herself up in such a manner any longer; and he suggested a visit to Miss Bolton.

She consented; in fact she was wishing much to see Sarah, but had not energy enough to make a movement in that direction, she was so prostrated by the report of Campbell's marriage, which she thought was confirmed by his thus completely forgetting to pay her the common civility of a visit. So, glad to see her equipage at the door without her having the trouble of ordering it, she put on her bonnet and stepped in; and not far from Laburnum Lodge she met a gentleman on horseback, who proved to be Dr. Campbell himself.

She stopped the carriage directly, and he approached the window. He made many kind inquiries, and was told that she was "quite well." They spoke of their late adventure, and he affected to laugh at the Indian.

"But you are very naughty," she said (she was trying playfulness, poor being!); "although you were such a gallant cavalier on the night in question, you never followed your chivalry up by a single call to inquire how I felt after having been nearly captured by our mysterious assailant."

This quite upset him; if she had been cold and sulky he could have dealt much better with her;—he did not know what to say; his present position with regard to her and her brother was far from being one to be disposed of by airy banter,—rather, very delicate and embarrassing,—and yet how could he be stiff and unkind to the poor young creature who met him so playfully in spite of his neglect, and whose only crime was to like him too much? Consequently he blushed, and did not answer directly, which she took for a good omen, thinking he was quite ashamed of himself. She said cheerfully,—

"Come, if you are sorry for your sins, we will forgive

you on condition you spend the day with us to-morrow; papa is surprised that you refused him last Tuesday."

"It is quite impossible, I fear; I must go to Sunville to-morrow," he answered. This was the first excuse that came into his head.

"What! are they ill there again?" said she.

"Oh, no, they are all well there; but—I am engaged to dine with them to-morrow." And he blushed again, for he was quite unaccustomed to tell even a white lie. But the blushes, the embarrassment, the engagement to dinner, were all enough for her; the conviction, kept at bay till now, rushed on her with a force not to be parried;—he was decidedly going to be married to Miss Neville!

He was astonished at the change in her face, but he was saved the trouble of taking any notice of it, for she waved him an adieu with her hand, and sank back in the carriage;—he, thus dismissed, rode on.

The coachman, little dreaming of the earthquake that had taken place in the human heart at the inside of that brilliant equipage, whipped on his pampered and mettlesome horses, and they soon arrived at Laburnum Lodge.

It is some time since we looked into the interior of our friends the Boltons; other affairs demanded our attention, and there was nothing very important going on among them. Neither love nor jealousy was agitating that tranquil domicile, and whatever little fun or humour had been wont to brighten it was gone for the present.

A few days after the walk to Blackheath George had quitted home to spend about two months in the house of a clergyman who, by the kind exertions of Mr. Davenport, had undertaken, on moderate terms, to complete the preparations necessary for his entering Cambridge in the ensuing October. Edmund was steadily pursuing his medical studies. So Sarah and Lucy were sitting silently

at work in the parlour with their father when Lord Northwood's carriage stopped at the gate.

Sarah was very glad to see it, for she had heard nothing of Caroline since the day they walked together to Blackheath, but on her entering the parlour she was appalled by the ghastly looks of her friend.

Lady Caroline kissed the two girls, and then Mr. Bolton would not be contented without a similar salute; this made her smile, and on the whole the three kisses did her good. Anything like affection and sympathy from persons of her own sex was a balm to her forlorn heart; she longed to pour out all her feelings and her sufferings to some judicious, loving female who could feel for, comfort, and advise her, and she was sensible the time was come; she had never stood so completely alone before; her brother had till now been her sole companion and confidant, as far as a young man can be so to a young girl; but a kind of estrangement had arisen between them; he suspected her of an attachment that he abhorred; she feared him, and could not speak to him on the subject that most interested her; so they could no longer be happy together;—she would tell all to Sarah;—she must do it or die.

When she sat down Sarah inquired anxiously whether she was ill.

"Oh, no, only I got a fright; but it was nothing; don't mind me; I am dreadfully nervous to-day."

"Shall I give you some hartshorn?" said Sarah.

"No, dearest Sarah, I am better now."

The wound received to-day was too deep for either Sarah's hartshorn or Mrs. Marsh's brandy to remedy.

"Sarah!" she cried, "you must promise you will come and spend a few days with me very soon—as soon as possible;—do not refuse;—I have a great deal to say to you —that I *must* say; Mr. Bolton seems pretty well,—you

will not be afraid to leave him;—promise me positively; —what day?"

She was growing quite hysterical; Sarah was very unhappy for her.

"My dear Caroline, indeed I will go to you very soon, but I cannot exactly name the day, for Dr. Campbell has ordered papa a very powerful medicine; even two drops above the prescribed quantity would be highly dangerous, so I permit no one but myself to measure it; but he is to stop it in a few days."

At the unexpected mention of Campbell's name, Caroline turned of a leaden hue, and seemed ready to fall from her chair. What Sarah had suspected was now plain to her, namely, that something new had happened respecting this wretched business, what it was she could not imagine, but one thing seemed certain,—there was a crisis coming; well, it was better it should; for as long as she persisted in wearing the mask and fostering the poison, her life was being sapped without hope or remedy. She said everything soothing and affectionate that she could in a general way, and Caroline expressed herself satisfied to wait for a few days. She also told the Boltons of Sabina's tragical passages and forced departure, adding that that was one of the chief causes of her present nervous state. This excuse for her "triste figura" being given by her, and received with reservation on the part of Sarah, and full faith on that of Lucy, she took her leave.

When she got home she went to bed immediately; she felt really ill now. She had been subject to a very distressing internal pain before she came to reside in the country, but after she had conformed to Dr. Campbell's judicious rules, and pursued a simple life, taking plenty of air and exercise, it had ceased to trouble her; for the last month, however, she had nearly given up these customs, and since her unfortunate visit to Mrs. Ford her mind

(which seemed to influence the attacks very much) had been in such a disturbed state, that it scarcely required the catastrophe of to-day to bring on the old pain with alarming force.

When the dinner-bell rang, the gentlemen were informed that she was in bed;—they were at her side in a moment;—the father cried out that he would send forthwith for Dr. Campbell;—the brother looked daggers; death before the doctor! She settled the matter herself without delay;—she would not see the doctor;—if he came to the house she would lock her door; she did not want any advice; she wished to be left alone.

They both looked astonished; Fitzarthur was completely at fault; he could not conceive what new state of mind prompted this sudden decision. Her father asked her what she would have for dinner;—she would have no dinner;—she implored of them to go away;—she was really too ill to have gentlemen in the room. They withdrew; the earl charging Elpsley to watch her symptoms and report to him, for assistance he must have, if she did not very soon get better. They then went down to their dinner, which they ate in silence and uneasiness; and thus commenced the first act of the autumnal drama of which Lord Fitzarthur had planned so agreeable a sketch in the morning.

But while Lady Caroline was writhing under the ruin of her hopes, and the imaginary triumph of her rival, that rival was far from being in an enviable condition. Still, hers was a mind stronger to bear, quicker to originate, and bolder to execute, than that of poor Caroline Fitzarthur. Disappointment might kill Miss Neville likewise, but she would not yield her bosom to the blow until every human resource had been exhausted. "Letty Cope" had succeeded in convincing her,—not a very difficult task,—that Campbell was her devoted admirer, but was doubtless too

modest to dare to aspire to her hand; and she on her part had given him as much encouragement as would have emboldened any man on earth to try his chance, and still he spoke not! truly he was shy and timid beyond belief and bearing; and what was still worse, he was giving up calling, and had refused the last invitation to dinner. She got into an agony of doubt and anxiety; perhaps owing to an excess of delicacy on his part, a morbid dread of being refused, she should lose him; and two hearts that only required a little explanation to render them completely happy, might, for want of some energy on her side, be made miserable for life.

While she was considering how she would recall him she noticed (it was the morning after Lady Caroline had taken to her bed) that her mother ate hardly any breakfast, and looked rather pale. On being questioned, Mrs. Neville pleaded guilty to a derangement of the stomach.

When the two girls and Miss Cope were sitting in the drawing-room after breakfast, Miss Neville began to lament the condition of her poor mamma, and declared that something must be done for her.

"She always manages herself very successfully when she gets these little ailments," observed Maria.

"That may do very well until a certain age, Maria; but mamma must not be allowed to go on quacking herself for ever; and now that she is not young, it might be quite dangerous if she were to get an obstinate indigestion."

"Dyspepsio is your word," interrupted Maria, without looking up from her sketching.

"The word I choose is *my* word," retorted Miss Neville, haughtily; "and if I make myself understood, language can go no farther. I know a doctor must be got for mamma."

"You ought to make language a little more definite at least, Alicia, to render it perfectly intelligible to me. For *a* doctor perhaps you mean *the* doctor; am I right?"

"I cannot pretend to dive into your meaning," answered Miss Neville, looking red and angry; "mamma must have medical advice, wherever it is procured; I don't think that is a very sibylline sentence, nor a surprising desire on the part of a daughter, and I will go and speak to her immediately;" and she swept out of the room.

"You see, Letty, she is determined to bring back that man whom I thought we had shaken off," said Maria; "there is scarcely anything the matter with mamma."

"Poor thing! it is pleasant to see a daughter so anxious," said Miss Cope.

"You know in your heart, Letty, that is not what she is thinking of; she can't live without this man at her elbow; it is truly shocking! if she marries him, I vow—" and Maria was obliged to stop short in her threat, for she could not hit on any way of punishing her independent sister; she knew full well that, if she declared she would never see Alicia more, it would give her not the least concernment, provided she could get Dr. Campbell in her place.

"But there is no talk of marriage," said Miss Cope; "he is a most agreeable man to pass an evening with; in the country too, where there is very little choice."

"Letty Cope! you are quite aware of the way in which she is going on to him; if she brings him back again she will certainly do something dreadfully foolish; you know more than you will tell; confess,—has not she some horrid plan for disgracing herself and us?"

"She has a strong sense of her own dignity," said the chorus, which was relieved from any further interrogatories by the entrance of Miss Neville, who seemed quite satisfied with the result of her interview with her mother.

She went to her desk and wrote a note, and, having directed and sealed it, she carried it off.

"Letty, to whom was that note directed?" asked Maria.

"Indeed I don't know."

"You were as close as possible to it when you took her the lighted taper."

"My sight is so bad."

"Then I don't know how in the world you can see to work that mat for the china vase."

"The hand learns to run mechanically from stitch to stitch after some practice," said the chorus.

How long a lady can remain without bursting in an ignorance that she is very eager to have dissipated, it is difficult to determine; for she generally makes such strenuous efforts to get light thrown on it, that she is blessed with success before poor Patience is allowed any chance of exhibiting her influence. Certain it is that Miss Maria Neville remained painfully curious and heroically silent until about three in the afternoon, when she was mercifully relieved by the entrance of Sabina. This old friend of ours, terrible as the wind-lashed ocean when she was angry, but now mild as May, was beginning to be reconciled to her new abode. She never mentioned Lady Caroline, and if questioned in any way about her would answer only,—

"De grace, ne m'en parlez pas; elle m'a outragée; elle est ingrate!"

Ardent both in love and hatred, she was deeply unforgiving if she thought that the former met with a requital unworthy of its deserts. She now tripped gaily into the room and said to Miss Neville,—

"Monsieur le docteur vient d'arriver, ma'mselle; il se trouve dans le salon avec Madame; je l'ai vu très souvent dans le château de Milord; oh! je l'aime tant!"

"What do you mean by saying you love him?" asked Miss Neville, haughtily.

"Il ressemble beaucoup à mon père, et voilà, ma'mselle, pourquoi je l'aime tant."

Maria began to laugh, angry though she was at his arrival.

"I would thank you to speak English," said Miss Neville to Sabina, piqued, and not knowing how else to vent herself; "you know I hate to be pestered with French."

"Whatever you please, Miladi," said she.

"You are to speak nothing but French to me, Sabina," said Maria, "as that was my chief reason for wishing you to come here."

"Sans doute, ma'mselle," said the poor girl; and then, looking from the one sister to the other, she muttered, "Anglais, Français,—cela ne sera pas difficile;—" and seemed to be endeavouring to reconcile herself to her double allowance of mistress.

"How old is this father of yours?" asked Miss Neville; "a young man, I suppose."

Sabina put up her fingers to count his years.

"One hand will do, Sabina," said Maria; "let each finger stand for ten; five fingers are just the number you require; your father of course must be fifty?"

"Eh, que non!" said she, indignantly; "il n'avait que trente ans quand je l'ai quitté; j'avais une marâtre; je ne pouvais rester." Then turning to Miss Neville,—"Miladi, I could not live with my new mother, so I went to Paris to my aunt, the wife of a confiseur; but I loved my father very much; he had beautiful eyes, like that doctor's, but more fiery—"

"Well, we have heard enough about him for the present," said Miss Neville, impatiently; "go to the hall,

and, when the doctor comes out of the room where mamma is, show him in here.

Sabina retired.

"I must learn exactly what diet mamma is to follow, she is so careless; is not she, Letty Cope?" said Miss Neville.

"Indeed not at all particular; as easily pleased as if she had only a hundred a year," said the obsequious Miss Cope.

Maria said nothing, and in a short time Dr. Campbell made his appearance. He looked serious, almost gloomy, and Maria was half afraid her mother was worse than she had supposed. Miss Neville thought very little about her mother; to her, Campbell had a distant look of estrangement that shocked her; she supposed she had affronted him. He shook hands with the three ladies and sat down.

"What do you think of mamma?" said Maria.

"Oh, she is not very bad," answered he.

"A mild attack of dyspepsio probably?" said she.

"What disease is that, Miss Maria Neville?" said he, with a kind of smile that by no means endeared him to his future "sister-in-law."

"I'm sure I think it is a very common disease, and you know very well what I mean; but perhaps I did not pronounce it quite right, though I think I did; I wish you would tell me."

Miss Neville would have laughed if anything could make her laugh then.

"A very trifling mistake," said Campbell, still looking disagreeable; "but we do not expect that you will be an adept at Greek words, or understand our craft; you should be only the charming Thalia or Euterpe, and leave us to the sterner labours of Hippocrates."

"Hush! I don't want compliments, and references to

the Muses, worn threadbare long ago," cried she, irritated beyond measure at the cold irony of his manner. "Will you please to tell me what is the matter with mamma?"

"Only a slight derangement of the stomach;" then turning to Miss Neville,—"I recommend you strongly to take Mrs. Neville to Harrowgate without delay, for the season is advancing, and—" He was going on, but she broke in—

"To Harrowgate! all the way to Harrowgate! so you are driving me out of the country!"

"Surely not, Miss Neville, when I am simply advising you to go with your mother to a place that will be serviceable to her health."

"I'm sure I do not want to prevent her from going there if she requires it, but why do you tell me to take her? she is old enough to go by herself I suppose, or else Miss Cope or my sister could go with her; there are other persons to whom we owe a duty as well as our parents ('yourself, among the rest,' she might have said; 'I will stick by you until I conquer you'). I cannot leave home at present; I have a great deal to do; harvest is commencing, and I have promised the tenants a great harvest-home; in fact, I am under several engagements; mamma may go wherever she requires, but you need not desire me to 'take her,' for I really cannot."

He answered,—

"I did not know you had so much business at home, Miss Neville; I was going to advise you, after you had spent a month at Harrowgate, to go to some place on the coast and have a couple of months' bathing to strengthen your ankle after the accident."

"A month at Harrowgate, and two months at the sea!" she exclaimed: "three months away! how coolly you talk! I won't go near the sea;—I want no bathing;—my ankle is perfectly strong;—I'll stay at Sunville among my people;

—*they* do not wish to get rid of me;—to them, thank God! I can be a blessing."

In her rage at his manifest indifference to her, she was on the point of betraying herself.

Maria sat petrified; Dr. Campbell laboured hard to suppress a smile, and was partially successful; and Miss Cope, presuming a little on being in Miss Neville's confidence, laid her hand on her arm and said,—

"My dear Miss Neville, Dr. Campbell does not know of the benevolent schemes that your heart is set on executing; he thinks health the first object, of course; but" (turning to Campbell) my friend, as she allows me to call her, is so absorbed in the welfare of others that she forgets private interests; but perhaps you will not urge her to go to a bathing-place if she says she is quite strong."

She secretly pressed Miss Neville's hand, endeavouring to recall her to herself.

Certainly in the present case she was useful; the short time occupied by her speech served to calm the young lady, and make her half ashamed of her excitement.

"Oh no, Miss Cope," said Campbell coldly; "if Miss Neville feels her ankle as strong as ever, why should I urge her to go? perhaps I should not have volunteered my advice without being asked for it."

"I was afraid," said Miss Neville, slightly abashed, "that you would have insisted on the necessity of my going; and it would have been such a disappointment to all those poor people if I had run away from them just at harvest time, that I got quite nervous; indeed, bathing does not agree with me; I never was so well as since I came here."

"Then I suppose you cannot do better than continue here," said Campbell, rising.

"Where are you going?" said she: "pray stay and

dine; we expect Mr. and Mrs. Parker, intimate friends of ours; they are coming to pass some days with us; he is a very pleasant man, and she sings charmingly; an old schoolfellow of mine."

"Impossible, Miss Neville; I am engaged to spend the evening at the Vicarage."

"But you can go there any other evening, and you will not often meet with such agreeable people as the Parkers."

"This is little Miss Davenport's birthday, and there is to be quite a feast; the dear child came herself to my cottage this morning with her papa to invite me; I would not for the world disappoint her."

"Oh! very well; when 'the world' is put into the balance, I know matters are hopeless. You seem amazingly fond of children."

"Indeed I am; are not you?"

"I like them very well in their proper place."

"That is," observed Maria, "you like them in a nursery at the top of the house, with the door locked, to keep the little dears in 'their proper place.'"

"The infant state is deeply interesting," whimpered Miss Cope, and Campbell, having agreed with her, took his leave.

There was silence a few minutes after his departure; then Miss Neville said, half to herself,—

"To drive us off to Harrowgate, and then to the seaside, without a moment's notice!"

"Drive us!" echoed Maria; "as if he was a drover, and we a set of cows! The poor man was sent for, and he ordered what he thought the best remedy. And I daresay he will allow us two days to prepare; you can write him another note to-morrow, bidding him come here and tell us what packing-time he can possibly permit."

"You may taunt me as much as you like, but I will get advice for mamma whenever she requires it."

"You make the most laudable exertions to get her a doctor, I allow; but it is surprising how lukewarm you grow if you do not relish the prescription," answered Maria.

"I deny being lukewarm," cried Miss Neville, angrily; "I wish her much to go to Harrowgate, if she requires it; and I dare say you, and Letty Cope too, will have no objection to accompany her. I will remain at home."

"All alone?"

"Yes, all alone. I stand in my father's place, to administer his property with reference to the advantage of others as well as of myself. My situation may be a conspicuous and painful one, but it has been laid on me by circumstances beyond my control. It remains for me to do my duty, as far as my feeble powers and the disadvantages of my sex will permit. I cannot be a 'bread-and-butter' miss, hanging on the arm of mamma, and simpering about the ball-room looking for 'promotion.' I have an independent existence, a personality of my own, that sets me completely apart from the usual title of 'one of Mrs. So-and-so's daughters.' I have a responsibility on my mind, not, I repeat, chosen by myself,—a part to perform among the landlords of England." She sat erect, and looked sternly at her sister. For a moment she forgot Dr. Campbell in the contemplation of those duties, the necessity of performing which she had forced upon herself for the sake of remaining near him, but which, now when she had begun to reason about them, had assumed a vitality and an authority of their own that kindled up all the better part of her nature.

"Sublime!" exclaimed Maria, with a sneer.

Miss Neville eyed her scornfully, and said nothing. Maria continued:—

"I will gladly go to Harrowgate with mamma, if she desires it. I'm sure it will be a relief to get away from that doctor for a few weeks, he is so disagreeable."

"Just because you made a blunder about a Greek word, and are always choosing learned terms that you don't understand; 'my word,' after all, was the right word for a lady."

"I did not know there was a language apiece for men and women. I don't want to learn *his* language, until he can teach it with less sarcasm."

This dialogue was happily interrupted by the entrance of the heroine of the day.

"Well, mamma?" said Maria, looking inquiringly at her.

"Well, my dear?" answered her mother.

"Why, of course, I want to know how you feel now."

"Pooh! child, I'm very well."

"How soon Dr. Campbell cured you!"

"I was much better before he arrived; I did not want him at all, but Alicia seemed so very unhappy about me, that I consented to have him, just to please her."

"Mamma," interrupted Miss Neville, did he tell you you ought to go to Harrowgate?"

"To Harrowgate? no, indeed; why do you ask?"

"Because he desired us to take you there."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mrs. Neville. "Such a pother about nothing I never heard; he may bid me go there if he chooses, but, I can promise you, I won't mind him; if I were ill even, it is a place I dislike. I was there with your poor father; he mistook his disease, and fancied the chalybeate springs there would cure him; on the whole, I hate the thoughts of it; Cheltenham agrees best with me, but, thank God! I don't require any waters at present; I will, however, take the medicines Dr. Campbell prescribed for me, as I daresay they will

be useful. Come, what have I to do now? Yes; I must go and see that their apartments are in perfect order for the Parkers;—I desired Sabina to bring in a choice bouquet for Mrs. P.'s dressing-room, and I will help her to arrange it in the vases." Having so said, she trotted out of the room.

Miss Neville drew a long breath, apparently much relieved by the annihilation of the Harrowgate scheme.

"What a tiresome day we have spent! Letty Cope, will you come and breathe the fresh air with me?"

They strolled along by the irrigation.

"What do you think of him now?" asked Miss Neville.

"I think he is very anxious that you should all be made strong and well," answered Miss Cope.

"He ordered me away for three months; there is nothing very fervent in that."

"Indeed, he seems to be so solicitous for your health that he would make any sacrifice to obtain it: positively I saw his lip quivering after he thought it his duty to speak of Harrowgate." (Campbell had been torturing away the troublesome smile that Miss Neville's wrath had provoked.)

"Letty Cope, are you or are you not fancying all these things?"

"My judgment is considered very good; I have but little fancy."

"Letty Cope! the time is past for windy words;—something must be done."

"Oh, goodness! what would you do?"

"How amazed you are! how long do you think I can tolerate the situation I am in? I must discover his sentiments with regard to me. You say timidity alone prevents him from declaring himself, but you won't give me your reasons for thinking so. Maria is so insulting,

and he is so impenetrable, and you are so vague, and mamma is so superficial and empty, that I am nearly driven to madness. I would do anything to relieve myself from my present horrible condition. Pride! under foot with pride! If he does not wish to share my fortune he *shall* say so, and I will spend the rest of my life in endeavouring to do all the good I can to those whom Providence has placed under me. I can be resigned to a certain misfortune, but I cannot exist under the state of suspense that I am now in. I am useless to all those whom it is my duty to watch over, and I am a burden to myself. It is not for my own interest solely that I strive to escape from this fatal pit into which I have fallen; I do not belong entirely to myself; circumstances have raised me to an elevation in which I must act for the well-being of others; and by thus remaining paralysed, a prey to false shame, I bury the talent my Master has placed in my hands. Letty Cope, don't you think I should conquer fastidious feelings for the good of those about me?"

"Oh! I hardly understand you," cried Miss Cope, trembling.

"Why, by bringing matters to a crisis, and honestly asking him—whether he is really wishing—don't pretend to be so stupid!"

"Suppose you gave up the idea of him?" whispered Miss Cope, timidly.

"No, no, I cannot, when perhaps, as you think yourself, he may be waiting for one word from me."

"There will be so many at your feet far beyond him," said Miss Cope again.

"That is as I think—as I think. No; there is none with whom I could be so happy; none whom I could worship like him. And to lose all for want of an effort! I am an extensive landed proprietor;—I am not in the

subordinate position of other women, and I have a right to act in a more independent manner than they. He will not wonder, Letty Cope: he knows my disposition, and he seems rather to admire it. I will dazzle him with my glory, and then lay it all at his feet. Now I am like a wretch lying on a rock of diamonds, with the wellsprings of life gliding a little beneath his lips."

"I am sure you will do nothing beneath your rank and dignity," murmured Miss Cope.

"No, I will not, my good Cope; nothing according to my own notions of those tyrants to a noble and free nature when they are made the authorities that are to govern our actions, instead of mild correctors when we rush on too madly in obedience to a headlong will. The course I have fixed on is reasonable; remember I do not stand in the position of other women; I enjoy something of a man's power of free action. Come, let us go in and prepare to receive the Parkers."

Miss Neville's plan was not a very intricate nor roundabout one. She would simply and without any ambiguity lay her vast earthly possessions at the feet of the "dispensary doctor." She had, as we have just seen, succeeded in persuading herself that this was the most natural thing possible for her to do in her remarkable situation,—not forward nor indelicate, considering the immense distance between her and him, a distance that she took for granted he considered so great that he never would have the courage to bridge over the chasm by any effort of his own. But she would show him that there was no chasm wide enough to separate two hearts that were yearning towards one another; nay, she would widen the gap as far as it was possible to stretch it, and then astonish and confound him by extending her hand, and gently drawing him over.

In short, she settled that she would give a magnificent

entertainment in some shape or another, and would spare no expense to make it more brilliant and superb than anything that had been seen in that country before. The abundance of her wealth should be exhibited at it in the most unsparing manner; nature and art should unite their marvels to make it equal to Calypso's island or Armida's garden; all the nobility and gentry for twenty miles round should be invited to behold, enjoy, and wonder—to envy the lucky man, whoever he was, that should some day find ready to his hand all that so many thousands toil, intrigue, and waste their lives to obtain, without success. In the most glowing moment of this brief period of enchantment she would take one of the many opportunities that these vast assemblages afford, to whisper to the chosen of her soul that everything he beheld was his,—or something to that effect: the exact terms were not fixed on yet, but the offer was to be definite. On that day everything was to end between them, or a new life of celestial bliss was to commence. Would he not be intoxicated? If love had never existed in his heart before, would it not spring up full-grown and strong when the goddess of that Olympus revealed to him that she scorned all the candidates who thronged around her and fought for her favours, 'throwing her happiness, her possessions, and herself into his lap?

Alas! and was it come to this,—that her warm and loving heart should be reduced to such an expedient? That she should claim the privilege of wealth as a ground for unsexing herself; that she should seek to win by confounding and dazzling the object of her pursuit, and be satisfied if she could inebriate him into acquiescence? Did she fondly hope that, if she stepped forward in the character of a man, the proud Campbell would fall back into the position of the female, and blushingly suffer himself to be tenderly wooed, and triumphantly won?

And was this the road to solid and lasting happiness? No, she would have once said; but now, blinded by a passion that still seemed to be met with coldness, every feeling was perverted; and rather than yield to despair, she satisfied herself with the last hope that, if she built a temple round her god, and bowed down to it, that god might condescend graciously to accept her homage.

As to her mother and sister, if they felt disinclined to her entertainment, they had their remedy. They might go to Harrowgate, according to advice, and leave her and her friend Mrs. Parker together; or, if they wished to fly still farther from the rout, they might go to Jericho. Sunville belonged to her, and she would do as she chose in her own house. The estate in Hampshire was Maria's, and she never interfered there. So, in fact, Maria would have two havens to fly to—Harrowgate, and her own place, Falcontowers—if she was too wise or too quiet for the total *bouleversement* that was going to take place in the household.

In the evening, while Mr. James and Mr. Parker were at their wine (the former gentleman being generally summoned to act as master of the feast when any of the male sex were guests at Sunville), Miss Neville gave Mrs. Parker an account of the numerous families in the neighbourhood who had entertained her and her mother and sister since their arrival among them, and expressed her intention of making a general return for all their civilities on some grand scale suited to her fortune.

Mrs. Parker, who was young, gay, and without children, entered readily into any scheme of pleasure. Maria could not object to return compliments received; and Mrs. Neville declared the young people had her consent to do anything they pleased, provided they did not ask her to go to Harrowgate. The form which the hospitality was to take was then eagerly discussed. A *déjeûner* on the

lawn, with marquees, music, &c., wound up by a ball in the evening, was proposed; but Miss Neville did not like that, she did not want to have the affair going on the whole day,—Campbell could be managed in five or six hours as well as in twelve: it should be all in the house, where the glory could be compressed and intensified within a smaller space, in the which he was to be blinded, overpowered, and led captive.

"No, no, my dear Janet, I am to have a harvest-home, and all sorts of rustic amusements in the open air, a few weeks hence, and that will be quite enough of outdoor work in this uncertain climate: strike out something else."

Janet Parker (who, as an old schoolfellow, had the honour of being called by her Christian name) was a little histrionic, and cried out eagerly, "Suppose an amateur play to begin the evening with, and then a ball!"

"Foolishness!" exclaimed Maria; "where in the world should we get persons competent to perform? Mr. James, I suppose, dressed in a petticoat, with a pink silk handkerchief half concealing his white budding breast, acting the dairy-maid, and tapping and tossing the butter; while Dr. Campbell, dressed as a ploughboy, is making love to her on the sly, until in comes Major Smyth, as mistress of the house, with his parchment face shaded by a straw bonnet, and wearing a white apron that exhibits a certain protuberance to the highest advantage,—and catches them in the fact."

The ladies were convulsed with laughter at this picture,—all but Miss Neville, who did not choose to have Dr. Campbell placed in such a ridiculous group. She had been in the habit of laughing at Mr. James and Major Smyth to her heart's content, but she never did so now: she was too much engrossed by Campbell to pay that

attention to other people's foibles which is requisite if we mean to satirize them properly.

"There is no occasion to ridicule our friends, Maria," said she. "Janet, that entertainment is out of the question. The best amateur performers are the most tiresome, insipid creatures possible: how can they be otherwise, when it takes professional persons years before they can excel? Think of something else."

"Well, a fancy ball; what would you say to that, Alicia?"

The proposal pleased Miss Neville; this would afford her an opportunity of presenting a *coup d'œil* of the most brilliant character. Heroes, chieftains, kings, in their various gorgeous costumes, were immediately conjured up, all passing before her and sighing for a gracious look, while she, magnificently arrayed as Juno, with a coronet of diamonds on her brow, would turn coldly from them all, and, marking out the quiet, solitary man, in the dark, simple habiliments of his profession (for she instinctively felt he would not go in any character), she would whisper to him that he was the only star in that crowd of planets with their borrowed light; that he was the only genuine, really intelligible page to her, amidst those swarming volumes of tawdry, gilded fiction.

"Oh, capital, Janet! just the thing that I should like; this is fixed upon." And she looked at her sister.

Maria made no objection; in fact, a fancy ball was rather to the taste of her poetico-artificial mind.

"Now, Janet," continued Miss Neville, "you must promise not to stir from this until it is all over. You said in your letter that you were coming for a week only, but that is mere nonsense."

"I should like it of all things," answered Mrs. Parker "but William says he must be at Lakeview by the first of September for partridge-shooting,—he has promised."

"Pooh! he may wait a few days; and besides, he can have some capital angling here; my steward shall take him to a first-rate trout-stream to-morrow."

When the two gentlemen came into the drawing-room the whole affair was communicated to them; and as to partridge-shooting, how could such an excuse stand for a moment before an imperious heiress in the foreground, and a fine trout-stream, a fancy ball, Juno and a tiara of diamonds, held up in perspective?

Miss Neville got into high spirits; it was a great matter that the Parkers had consented to remain; she wanted Janet to support her against Maria's grumblings, for she fully expected an insurrection on the part of her sister when she saw the house thronged with decorators and upholsterers, to say nothing of the clang of the carpenter's hammer, which would confuse her at her German, and torment her at the piano, but which must go on incessantly for nearly a fortnight.

"So you are to be Juno, Miss Neville? not quite tall enough, I should say,—eh?" remarked Mr. Parker.

"Oh, I will make it up in dignity," said she, smiling and tossing her head.

"Dignity and high heels will work wonders," observed Maria.

"I think I should make a very good Alcibiades," said Mr. Parker, who was a small dapper man, not at all inclined to distress his friends by the low estimation in which he held himself. Then turning to Mr. James, he said,—"And pray, sir, whom do you intend to call up from the grave, and endue with second life?"

Poor Mr. James, in a special light-coloured waistcoat, a white cravat tied most primitively, a thick chain and three big seals hanging perpendicularly from his fob, his hair cropped very close, and a diamond pin in the breast of his shirt, seemed to be in full character already.

"Nay," answered he, "I am too old for figurantes and fandangos; if the ladies will accept me, I will appear much as I am now."

"It will certainly answer perfectly well," said Maria.

"As to my little woman," said Mr. Parker, "I'll engage for her that she will perform the part of three or four different personages, and will be skipping to her room every two hours to change her dress. I must prepare to sell out of the funds to meet the expense of the various costumes;—but I warn you, my lady, I will not allow you to play the sailor as you did last Christmas at—"

"Now hold your tongue, William," cried she, playfully putting her hand on his mouth.

"You should see her dressed up like a tar, and singing one of Dibdin's sea songs," said Mr. Parker to the Nevilles, evidently very proud of the versatility of his wife's talents. "But, Miss Neville," added he, suddenly, "if you are to be Juno, what happy man will you elect to be your Jupiter?"

She coloured to a degree that surprised every one, but she tried to laugh, and said,—

"Oh, I shall dispense with that troublesome appendage; besides, to play it properly we should be fighting all the evening, and that would be bad fun."

"But when this Juno is never without the cestus of Venus," said Mr. James, bowing low to her, "her Jove can never be in any state but one of fascination."

"Ha, ha, ha!" cried Mr. Parker: "famous, I vow! Mr. James, you should go as a Euphuist of Queen Bess's times. Well, Miss Neville, we will suppose Jove absent on Mount Ida, chasing the nymphs, and you shall wield the thunder yourself."

"She is perfectly capable of doing so," observed Maria.

And while all these plans were in formation, and these

projects for unbounded expense were taking form and colour at Sunville for the sake of one man,—and while Lady Caroline in her turn was pining at Northwood Abbey for the sake of this same man,—how was he himself employed on the evening in question? He was at the Vicarage, celebrating the birthday by playing at blindman's buff with Mrs. Davenport's children, if not unconscious, yet quite oblivious of the feelings of the two ladies. But were not they playing at blindman's buff too? Were not they groping blindfolded, for a prize, the capture of which was in their opinion, to confer on them some great benefit? We are all playing at blindman's buff, more or less, in this world, and better would it be for two-thirds of us if we knocked our brains out against the wall, than that we succeeded in possessing ourselves of the treasure that is endeavouring to elude our grasp.

The next morning Miss Neville and Mrs. Parker commenced active preparations: the latter, with Maria's help, wrote a perfect snow-shower of invitations, a fortnight's notice being given; while Miss Neville, on her part, sent dispatches to some of her tradesmen in London, describing the sort of entertainment she proposed to give, and ordering them to send men and decorations, and everything necessary for bringing her intentions into full effect.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE MYSTERIES OF LOVE.

Quidquid habes, age,
Depone tutis auribus—Ah, . . .
Quanta laboras in Charybdi!
HORACE, Ode 27, b. 1.

AFTER a few days, when the invitations had been discharged in all directions, nothing was spoken of in the neighbourhood but the grand fancy ball that the heiresses of Sunville were about to give. Every one the Nevilles were acquainted with was invited, and many families were requested to bring with them any friends they pleased, for such affairs are a failure if not numerously attended. Sunville house, meantime, was turned topsy-turvy; Mrs. Neville was surprised; Maria was scared, but neither of them got much satisfaction if they ventured to put a question respecting the extent of the changes to be made, and the amount of the sum to which Miss Neville intended to limit herself; so they were obliged to be content to obtain their daily knowledge by their daily observation.

Miss Neville went from room to room, full of directions, but very uncommunicative. Mrs. Parker skipped about along with her, enjoying everything; Mr. Parker angled contemplatively in the morning, and in the evening praised his wife, insinuated many things very complimentary to

himself, and sang what he called bass, with the ladies, in a manner that gave him infinite satisfaction.

Maria having been confined to her chamber for a day or two by a cold, on making her appearance again in the dining-room, was surprised to see a long piece of ground into which the windows of the apartment looked, enclosed by temporary walls of planks, with a roof in preparation. Through the middle of this enclosure a tremendous pit about seventy feet long and fifteen wide had been dug, and at present exhibited rather a repulsive appearance.

"For mercy's sake, mamma, what horrid thing is that?" she cried.

"'Pon my word I'm sure I cannot tell, my dear. Mrs. Parker, will not you take some of your favourite white soup?"

Maria next looked at Mr. Parker; she dared not apply to her sister who sat up with her lips compressed, and the ominous stony expression in her eyes. Mr. Parker responded directly to the mute appeal.

"Oh, Miss Maria, 'tis nothing but a little geological convulsion that took place while you were confined to your room; I am glad you did not feel the shock above-stairs—'twas but trifling, indeed; I have taken a note of the whole, and I think my paper will read out very nicely at the next meeting of the British Association."

Mrs. Parker tittered, and Maria looked sulky and asked no more questions.

The next morning she went into the dining-room to see whether any progress had been made which might throw some light on the object of digging this hideous pit, and to her astonishment she saw that a great portion of the wall between the windows had been pulled down, and a grand arched entrance from the dining-room into the new enclosure was commencing its graceful span. The eyes of a dozen workmen fell on her as she advanced into the

apartment. In truth it was "apparet domus intus," with a vengeance.

She must have made rather a picturesque appearance to her rude beholders as she stood in the background facing them. A flood of light rushed from the aperture upon her waving blue muslin dress, which was well relieved by the dark massive sideboard, and the crimson paper of the room.

After a few moments she went up to one of the men, and asked him what all this meant, particularly the pit.

"Oh, ma'am, this pit will be a beautiful canal in a few days, or a small lake rather; we will line it first and then fill it with water. And the gentleman from London says there are to be pillars ranged along each side of the lake, and festoons of green leaves and flowers hanging from pillar to pillar, and coloured lamps mixed through them; and these walls of board are to be hung with scarlet stuff and lighted with lamps, and choice hexhotics are to be brought from all the greenhouses and ranged here in grand style. He says that when it is finished there won't be its match in all England. The company are to come into it from the parlour through this archway, but there is to be a curtain across it at first until they are all collected together, and then it is to be raised, my lady, quite sudden, to astonish the gentlefolks."

"Humph!" thought Maria; "one of them has been pretty well astonished already. And pray what use is to be made of the dining-room?"

"They're to dance in it, ma'am, and when they're tired they are to step in here to refresh themselves by the water's side among all the cool green plants. He says it will be as neat as job as ever he put out of hands."

"I dare say," thought Maria; "a nice piece of expense to cool people after their dancing."

Such an immense outlay for one night was certainly

provoking, but Maria on her side was a little penurious in her tendencies, and not inclined to do anything in the style to which her fortune entitled her. She went into the drawing-room, where she found her sister and Mrs. Parker. She could not attempt to remonstrate with Miss Neville for tearing down the parlour wall; the house was hers to pull down the whole if she pleased. It was frightful to think what that lake would cost, but it was not to be done with *her* money, and she guessed the answer she would receive if she hinted at the folly of such an undertaking. So she had to content herself with saying:—

"I should be glad to know where we are to dine to-day, Alicia."

"In the breakfast-room."

"Of course I don't care," replied Maria, "but really when one has friends in the house, to hunt them from place to place, and wedge them into nooks and holes, is too bad; I suppose Mr. Parker will run away to Lake View to-morrow morning."

Mrs. Parker fell into a fit of laughter.

"My dear Maria, he will be as comfortable as possible in the breakfast-room; do you think him such a giant as that he will not fit there? Why when I was going to be married they asked me whether I intended to keep him in my pencil-case; so, Alicia, he is sure not to run away as long as you have a pencil-case vacant for him."

But while Miss Neville is digging pits for Dr. Campbell, and knocking down the wall of her house that he may walk serenely from one scene of enchantment to another,—does it occur to you, reader, that he may decline the invitation? He hated these tremendous routs, and moreover was resolved to estrange himself from Sunville since he could not succeed in dismissing the family to a watering-place; so what could be more

likely than that he would refuse? Poor Miss Neville! It is really horrible to picture her situation on the event of such a disaster. However, Campbell did not refuse; it was not his intention to give up the acquaintance of the family completely, and if he ever accepted of an invitation from them, this was the most desirable, for in such a large assembly as that, he would probably not come in contact with Miss Neville for the whole evening; people of more consequence than he was would occupy her entire attention. This was his view of the case, poor simpleton! As it was his duty, of course, to make a second visit to Mrs. Neville, though he could not see that there was much the matter with her, he went to Sunville about a week before the ball was to come off, and noticed the immense preparations that were going on without any surprise; he thought that young ladies who had more money than they knew what to do with were employing it in a very usual manner. He could not see the volcanic heart that was boiling under that show of vanity and frivolity; he little dreamt of the utter scorn with which that ardent and impetuous woman surveyed each bauble as she piled it upon another; still expecting in her contradictory, unreasoning, feminine nature, that the effect of what she despised would produce the result for which her soul was pining;—that the mighty instrument which the world always wielded with so much success would not fail in her case, and that the Genius of Wealth, looking out from a thousand glittering creations, would overpower a mind that must be constituted in some measure like other minds, and make it adore her for all she offered, if not for all she was.

Mrs. Neville was as well as possible and very busy, giving her daughter all the assistance she was able. Campbell sat for a short time in the drawing-room with the young ladies, and when he rose to depart Miss Neville

asked him whether he had any friend whom he might wish to bring with him to her ball, as she would be happy to see him. He answered that he had not. She named his pupil Mr. Edmund Bolton. Campbell knew that Edmund would give anything to go there, but he thanked the lady and said that his pupil could not leave his father, who was not as well as might be wished. He would not accept of any compliment from Miss Neville, and Edmund was consigned to the same limbo with poor Higgin. When he was gone Miss Neville returned to her workmen, and Mrs. Parker fell into raptures with "the doctor."

"A most beautiful, bewitching creature, Maria! there is an expression about his lips that I do *so* like! Oh no, I mean that I don't like, for it is an expression that we women ought to say we do not approve of, however we may feel; you know, Miss Cope, we are expected to keep up to a certain standard of innocence and purity, and persuade the men that we are angels, seeing nothing, feeling nothing, knowing nothing, whether we are married or single, old or young. Poor fellows! I wonder, though, whether they always believe us. But that insinuating wretch,—what a pair of eyes he has! saying a heap of things that he would not dare to put into mother English. I wonder how many women he has ruined; how many would you say, Miss Cope?"

"O mercy! Mrs. Parker," murmured Miss Cope, sinking beneath the billows of her bashfulness.

"Really Janet," cried Maria, "I am quite disgusted with you! Is that the manner in which a steady, proper matron should speak? What are we girls to think of marriage, if it entitles women to use such freedom of speech? As to this man, I can see nothing to be admired about him; he is either obstinately stupid, or insolently sarcastic."

"He sings charmingly," put in Miss Cope.

"Is it possible?" cried Mrs. Parker. "Then Maria, never ask him to sing before me, if you wish me to keep my fealty to my William unimpaired; just imagine him singing:—

"Come rest in my bosom, my own stricken deer."

I desire you not to ask him to sing, for William's sake. A two-pair-of-stairs window—a three-pair—would not daunt me, with him at the bottom; out I'd fly!"

"And break your own neck and his back, and one of you at least would be very little loss; I do not say I mean you, Janet. There is no danger I will ask him to sing; I ask him to do nothing. Alicia strokes, and pets, and chirps to him, and the fellow arches his back sometimes, and does not seem to relish all the coaxing; but still I can promise you I am very uneasy."

"Ha, ha!" cried Mrs. Parker, "is that the way the wind blows? and what on earth are you uneasy about? Why should not she marry him? What the deuce is the good of having a tremendous lot of money if one cannot procure some immense felicity with it? why, with a twentieth of her fortune, she could feast on the best things to be had, wear the finest clothes, and have a nice equipage, a good house, and plenty of servants. There is a point at which those enjoyments, if multiplied any farther, become perfect bores, and then, what are you to do with all your surplus of wealth? would not any reasonable being think it the height of wisdom to employ it in making yourself happy with 'the poor man you adore?' that, to the penniless girl, unattainable vision of bliss, which she wastes her life in sighing for, but which papa and mamma comfortably order her 'to put out of her head,' preaching to her every day in the week that though two 'nots' make an affirmative, two poor persons do not make a rich one; and just by the time they think her reason is convinced,

she surprises them some evening by dying of a broken heart. But the fortunate heiress who can settle everything in an instant is to bid away from her all earthly happiness—for fear of what? the opinion of the world! I can assure you the world cares very little whom we marry; and with her arms round him, and her cornucopia showering riches on his head, think you that the mean, flattering world will not render him honours meet?—that world which falls down before a Tittlebat Titmouse when he hits on a sudden elevation! But what is this man? Why, nature has done everything for him, fortune only has forgotten him, but we will leave it to Alicia to refresh her memory, and the sooner she does so the better pleased I shall be."

"Indeed, Mrs. Parker, you have expressed many sensible and feeling things in that speech," said the chorus.

Maria found that it was vain to seek to rally a party round her to aid in condemning and resisting her sister's disgraceful inclinations; she must stand alone in the opposition.

"You need not exhaust your lungs, Janet," said she, "you had better reserve them for the piano; I don't care a button whom she marries, only it is revolting to see a woman persisting when a man takes her so coolly."

"Takes her so coolly!" repeated Mrs. Parker; "you will not persuade me, I can assure you, that a man in his position could take her coolly. What do you say, Miss Cope?"

"He is not demonstrative," answered Miss Cope.

"Can't believe that such luck could come to his share," suggested Mrs. Parker.

"Something in that way," rejoined Miss Cope.

Maria made no further remark, and Mrs. Parker,

having looked meditative for a short time, ran to the piano, and having dashed her hand along the keys for a few seconds, sang some verses in exceedingly rich and sweet tones. When she had finished she said to Maria:—

"There, this is a song I have just composed to your doctor, but Alicia is supposed to be the speaker, and I am going to show it to her, and give my full consent to the match."

She was cantering off, and Maria had great difficulty in detaining her.

"I entreat of you, Janet, not to mention to her one word of what I have been saying. I told you my suspicions merely, and if I thought you would have betrayed me I should never have opened my lips about the matter."

"Oh well, of course I will not let her know anything of our conversation," answered Mrs. Parker, "but I may show her the verses I have written on Dr. Campbell. I suppose I may admire him and write on him as much as I please, he is such a love of a man, with that mouth of his, and those insufferable eyes; if he'd say the thing out plainly it would not be half so bad," and she bounded off, carrying her verses in her hand, which we shall not give at present as they are in rather an unfinished state.

When she left the room Miss Cope looked after her.

"Highly talented, but a little wild for a married woman."

"Yes," said Maria, "marriage goes a very short way in taming women, unless one gets a frightful tyrant of a husband, whereas that idiot William Parker humours her in everything. The real way in which nature means women to be subdued is by obliging them to bring forth a

succession of children. She gives them a superabundance of strength and spirits with this object, and if, from any cause, there is a failure, the unnecessary supply nearly drives them mad, as you see in the instance of that little humming-top that has just whirled off to make mischief. If I had the ordering of her physical economy she should have a child every year, for five or seven years in succession; ay, and I would give her good hard labour too,—twelve hours of it each time—and then she would be brought down to a calm cheerful state of mind, so that one could live in the house with her."

"Oh my dear!" cried Miss Cope, "if you knew the agony of women on that trying occasion, you would not speak so."

"I hope, my good Letty, that I know as much about it as you do. Depend upon it I am right: look at that wife of Mr. Davenport's, how mild, and quiet, and meek-spirited she is; you scarcely hear the sound of her voice."

"I am afraid," said Miss Cope, smiling, "that the demand on her spirits exceeded the supply."

"Yes, perhaps so; Nature is not always perfectly just in her allotments, but in this case the fault is on the right side; it is better to be a mope like Mrs. Davenport, than a perfect nuisance like Mrs. Parker."

The unconscious Mrs. Parker, in the mean time, found Miss Neville, and having read the verses to her, and broken out into new raptures about "the doctor," she could plainly perceive by the ill-suppressed emotion of her friend that Maria's surmises were well grounded; so she officiously resolved to do everything in her power to promote the wishes of her old schoolfellow. Her quick mind grasped the whole matter; "the doctor" was too shy to propose, and Miss Neville too proud to make advances.

Sarah and Lucy Bolton had not of course received any invitation to Miss Neville's ball, as they did not visit at Sunville; so their enjoyment on the occasion was confined to laughing at such anecdotes connected with the approaching festivity as Edmund was enabled to tell them.

"Well," said the brother one morning to his sisters, "I hope the characters at this fancy ball will perform their part as well as Mr. Davenport is now doing himself, in all the spasms of a perplexed parson."

"What new trouble is he in? is he going to the ball?" asked Sarah.

"That is the whole point in question," answered Edmund. "He and Mrs. Davenport have got an invitation, but the name of a 'fancy ball' is startling; he is terribly afraid a clergyman ought not to be seen there, but he is longing above measure to go, and he has made some excuse for not sending an answer until two or three days have passed, during which he is to weigh the pros and cons, and is to endeavour to come to some terms with his conscience, which is now making very fierce resistance to his attacks on her virtue."

"She will capitulate," said Sarah.

"He is trying to blind her at present," continued Edmund. "His wife has been low-spirited since her late illness, and Mr. Warner, when he was here, observed that she was moped to death, and if she was not taken a little into company she would become insane; so Mr. Davenport insists that it is his duty to go there on her account, however painful it may be to himself. He also argues that at such places people have a tendency to deviate into a certain licence of speech and action, if not kept in awe by the presence of censors, and guardians of morals; and that if he does go, it will merely be as an ecclesiastical policeman,

to act as a check on his parishioners, 'among them, but not of them.' In fact, such a flood of advantages to the cause of virtue and propriety burst on him as he took this view of the case, that he put on a most solemn face, and said, 'Much as I dislike it, I am afraid I must go on principle,' on which Dr. Campbell could no longer refrain, but began to laugh, and told him that if he wanted to be really useful, he would not go about frightening and perhaps irritating his flock with the pastoral whip, but would assume a character, as other people did,—one that would appeal at once to men's most solemn feelings, and bring a truth before them that they could not combat in their wildest moments."

"I suppose," cried Lucy, "Dr. Campbell proposed that he should go as one of those terrible prophets who were always rowing the wicked kings of Israel——"

"Lucy!" said Sarah, in a rebuking tone.

"No, no:" said Edmund, "he suggested that if he went to such a dissipated place, it should only be as an Egyptian mummy, well bandaged, especially across the mouth, and get himself laid down in a conspicuous place, for he would be too heavy to get himself carried about, as the image really was at the Egyptian feasts; and thus he would most effectually throw a damper on all exuberance of mirth, and all tendency to forget their 'latter end,' with this massive warning before them."

Lucy laughed.

"And what did he say to that?"

"He got into a flaming passion, and said he would certainly go now, and enjoy himself too, just to punish Campbell, and that there was no need of any other warning for the people than to have one of those man-slayers of physicians stalking about the ball-room, making one wretched at the idea of all the poor mortals he

had killed last week, and all he was about to kill the next."

The merriment was here interrupted by a loud ringing at the hall-door bell, and immediately afterwards a note, with a coronet on the seal, was handed to Sarah. She opened it and read as follows:—

"My dear Miss Bolton,

"I hope your dear father has recovered his usual health, though I am apprehensive he has not, otherwise I am persuaded you would have performed your promise made to my poor daughter, that you would come and spend some days with her. Be assured your company was never so much desired by her as it is now; she has been growing worse every day since she called on you; scarcely ever leaves her bed, and eats nothing—absolutely nothing. You will no doubt say, 'Why not send for Dr. Campbell?' Well, my dear young friend, here is an enigma; —she will not listen to my offer of bringing him to her,— gets into a fever if he is mentioned, and my son has forbidden my ever naming him to her again. Dr. Campbell, on his side, never comes near the house, so what am I to think? Have they quarrelled? But you will say, 'Why should they quarrel?' That is a subject on which many thoughts and suspicions cross my mind, more than I care to commit to paper, but I will talk it over with you when we meet, for I have full confidence that you will not disappoint us, except my friend is ill and cannot dispense with you. The carriage shall be at your service every day to visit your father, and perhaps Caroline may be induced to accompany you;—for she says if you come she will eat;—if you come she will get up;—in fact it appears that you are to stand in Campbell's shoes. Indeed, my dear Miss Bolton, the more I see of girls, the more inex-

plicable I find them; no sooner do I generalize on their conduct of yesterday, than their conduct of to-day disperses all my conclusions to the winds. Allow me to add, that you form an exception, a decided exception, to these 'Cynthias of the minute'—(Pope, I fancy); and happy the man who could place such a jewel in his coronet.

"Believe me ever yours most faithfully,

"NORTHWOOD.

"P.S.—I have written to London, to my skilful friend, Dr. ——, begging of him to come down directly, and make a full examination of my daughter's case; I expect him the day after to-morrow at farthest, and wish much to have you with her while he is here."

These solicitations, joined to the delicate piece of flattery, were irresistible, and as Mr. Bolton was now pretty well, and as Edmund promised to leave him as little as possible, Sarah answered the earl's note by saying that she would go to Northwood Abbey the next day. Accordingly the carriage came for her, and conveyed her thither.

She found Lady Caroline dressed, and lying on a sofa in her room, anxiously awaiting her arrival. They embraced, and Caroline, after a little general conversation, in floods of tears revealed the secret that was undermining her health and spirits. Sarah listened without surprise, for it was only what she expected,—and without any expression of disapprobation, for she felt that would be as unbecoming on her part as it would be useless to her friend.

Poor Caroline was overwhelmed with joy at the manner in which Sarah received this humiliating confession; nay,

the passion seemed to have lost half of its undignified character by the great composure of the listener. From her knowledge of Sarah's rigid opinions on all subjects connected with women's self-respect and pride, she was prepared for a burst of astonishment, and a host of upbraidings; to be reminded of rank, dignity, high feelings, and the whole train of concomitants which her own heart had often told her turned her love into a shame and a reproach. But she heard none of these things; words of sympathy, guarded but kind, gave an immense relief to her weak and overburdened heart. She kept her face concealed on Sarah's neck as she whispered:—

"I am not thinking of marriage; that, I know, is out of the question; but oh, Sarah! it would be the greatest comfort to me if I thought there was a possibility that he was not going to be married to this Miss Neville."

Sarah wished heartily that he was; it would be the best thing that could happen for Caroline. However, as she knew he was not, it would be unfair and wrong to permit the error to continue. She answered:—

"As to that report, I think I can say confidently that it is false. Neither my brother, nor any one I know, ever heard that such a thing was dreamt of. I will ask Edmund, if you wish, whether he has any suspicion of it."

"Oh do, dear Sarah, but not so as to let him imagine that I—"

"Of course," answered Sarah.

Caroline remained quiet for a while; she was exhausted by what she had gone through.

Sarah left her to herself, and began to meditate on the next step to be taken. She saw her friend so prostrated that she abstained for the present from asking her any questions respecting her future resolutions;—*her* resolu-

tions, indeed! what would they be the first time Campbell presented himself again before her? The earl must be told all, and Caroline must be taken out of the country; this, Sarah was convinced, was the sole remedy that would be in any degree efficacious. But would Caroline ever consent to let her father be told the humiliating secret? And what could she (Sarah) say to Lord Northwood when, as she anticipated, he would consult her on his daughter's situation, and disclose the suspicions which, it was evident by his letter, he had conceived? Her situation was a painful and intricate one, but she had prudence, and judgment, and coolness enough to carry her through many difficulties. She resolved to do nothing until the London physician arrived, who, by delivering his opinion on Lady Caroline's case, would probably supply some basis of action, and by announcing, perhaps, that her life was in danger, would render fidelity to the daughter treason to the father, and make further concealment nothing better than a crime.

Lady Caroline was so thoroughly relieved by Sarah's assurances that Dr. Campbell had no idea of marriage, that she actually dressed and came down to dinner with her friend. Wan, wasted, and weak, she looked, certainly, but the reaction had raised her spirits unnaturally. Her father was astonished and delighted. Miss Bolton was hailed as an enchantress—a Medea, who, however, was using her power for the most benevolent objects alone.

Lord Fitzarthur was puzzled; he had solved many propositions in mathematics, but the riddle of a woman's heart was beyond his power to read. She had turned against Campbell just at the time when he thought there was the least hope of her giving him up, and the fascinating influence seemed to be transferred to Miss Bolton—a

woman! Well, it was strange, but she was safe as long as this vagary lasted. Revolving time had brought to Turnus what none of the gods would have dared to promise him; but Turnus's mind was not easy; there were two bright spots on her cheeks; her laughter was hysterics, not mirth; she spoke rapidly, and ate nothing.

END OF VOL. II.

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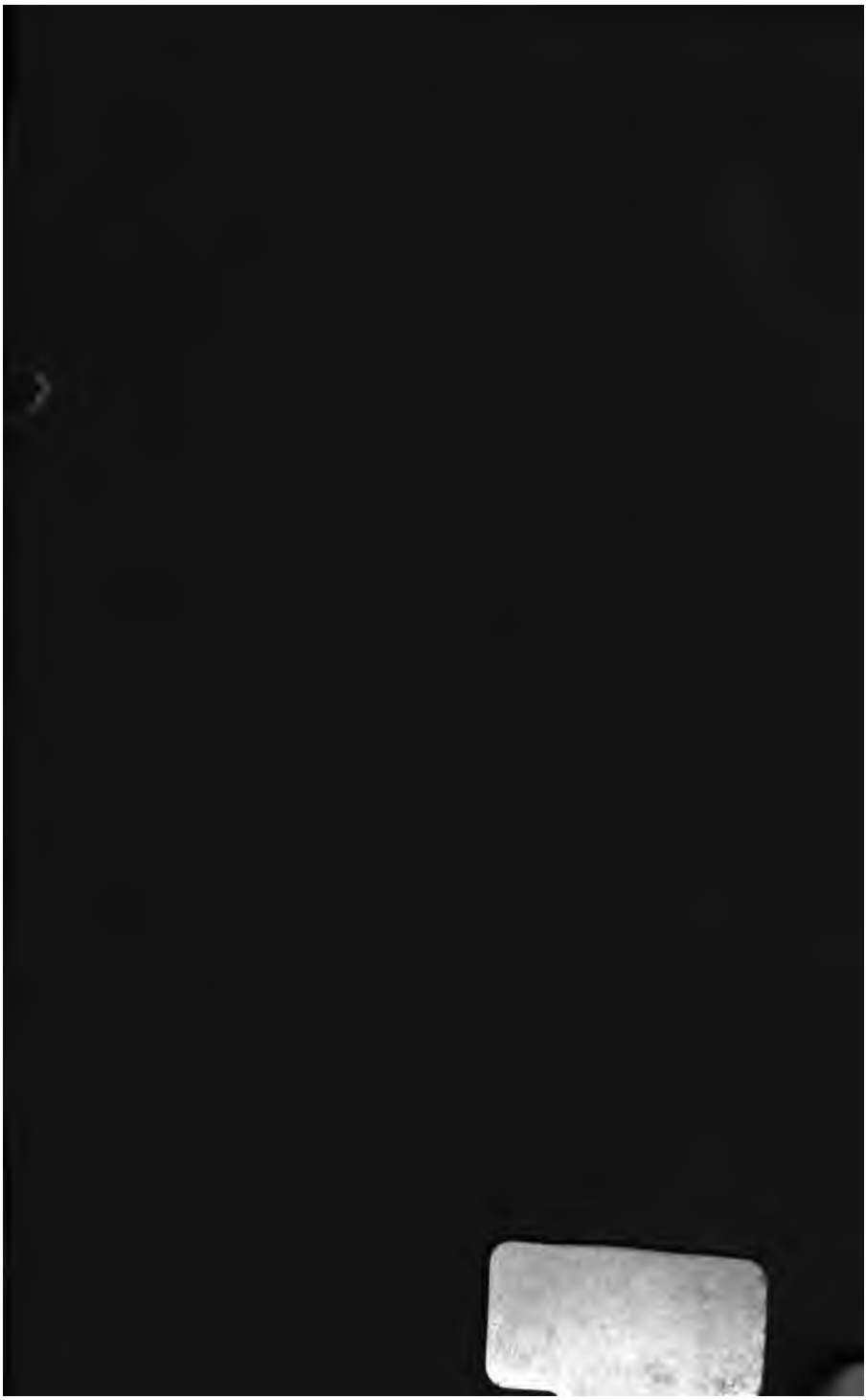
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